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Allegiances

The cover is temporary btw... But I think it's the best.

Update: Nah it's probably staying.

_____

Dark Forest

Leader(s):

NoName (red-furred she cat with glowing white eyes)

Dime (black tom with brown tipped tail and paws and green eyes) breezystxr

_____

Enforcers:

Tyler (black and blue tom with blue eyes and blue dragon wings)

Strike (black and red tom with red eyes and red dragon wings)

Flare (golden orange she cat with yellow eyes and orange feathered wings)

Zephyr (grey Promethean tom with red eyes) breezystxr

Tigerstripe (dark brown tom with black stripes and green eyes) The_Warrior_Writer

_____

Dark Forest Warriors:

Bolt

Lostpaw

Blast

Floss

Honeyclaw

Coldkit

Mystery

Rivergaze

Thunder

Petal

Yellowtail

Shadeheart (black tom with brown tipped tail and paws and golden eyes)

Darksky (black she cat with green eyes)

Bluestorm (blue she cat with blue eyes)

Stormcloud (grey dappled tom with yellow eyes)

Blazeheart (golden tom with amber eyes) breezystxr

Nightwhisper (black she cat with vibrant blue eyes) breezystxr

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Dark Forest Apprentices:

Spiderpaw (black and brown she cat with amber eyes)

———

Queens/kits:

Flowerstream (light grey she cat with amber eyes) Kits: Jaykit, Cloverkit, Featherkit, Windkit, Rainkit, Hollowkit

Redleaf (ginger she cat with blue eyes) Kits: Snowkit, Flamekit

Bluesnow (blue furred she cat with blue eyes) The_Warrior_Writer

Blossomfur (cream furred she cat with green eyes) Kits: Shadowkit, Flintkit, Cinderkit

_____

The Ghost Collective: breezystxr

Spectre (jet black tom with white eyes)

Phantom (tortoishell tom with white eyes)

Revenant (beautiful red she cat with black eyes)

Wraith (blue furred she cat with black eyes)

_____

Prisoners:

Lightclan

Shinewing (golden furred she cat with amber eyes)

Dapplegrey (White she cat with grey speckles and vibrant green eyes)

Blizzardstorm (white and grey tom with blue eyes)

Goldpool (golden furred she cat with piercing yellow eyes)

Tornwing (White furred she cat with soft ginger patches. Has only half of her tail left and her right eye is clawed shut by badgers) jshin17

Silvershy (silver tabby she cat with lush green eyes) Silverstxr

Greystep (grey tom with amber eyes)

Sweetleaf (silver she cat) jshin17

Wrenpaw (reddish-brown she cat with amber eyes) toomanymemes

_____

Echoclan

Stormfang

Tanglesong

Briarcloud

Runningclaw

Russetflare

Brookpaw

_____

Smallclan

Marigoldfur

Cedarclaw

Ripplenose

Flightstripe

Blazestream

_____

Ravenclan

Rushclaw

Thunderstrike

Ashpurr

Fishheart

Sparrowear

Beechpaw

Starclan

Skystar (white and green furred she cat with golden eyes)

Silverstar (silver tabby she cat with lush green eyes) Silverstxr

Lightstar (pale she cat with green eyes)

Jumpingstar (brown tom with amber eyes)

Spark (light ginger she cat with pure blue eyes)

Cats outside the clans

Zeye (pure white Promethean tom with glowing blue eyes) breezystxr

Spectrum (black Promethean she cat with green eyes)

Prologue

An owl hooted nearby, startling the black she cat. She lifted her head, searching for the nocturnal bird, but saw nothing.

The forest was dark. Not even the moon's light could pierce through the dense leaves.

Spectrum kept herself low to the ground as she slunk through the undergrowth, her light green eyes on the constant look out for danger. The forest was unfamiliar to her, far away from the clans. So far she had found little life, only the soft scuttling of prey scrambling away as she approached. No scents of potential enemies had reached her heightened senses.

Straightening herself into a relaxed stance, Spectrum peered briefly over a small bush. What lay on the other side was simply a few paw prints moulded into the soft, damp ground. A cat was nearby.

"Where are you fox-breath?" The she cat muttered with a lash of her tail, slinking onto the pathway to see if she could follow the tracks.

"I'm right here," came a soft reply behind Spectrum. She whirled around and was immediately confronted by Spark's glowing blue orbs.

Spectrum snarled at the ginger she cat. "How did you-"

"I suppose your fancy Promethean senses aren't so great after all." Spark smirked widely at the black she cat, her teeth shining in the eerie glow her eyes created.

Spectrum drew in a deep breath, unsheathing her claws. "I'll have you know that my powers are far more superior than your moon mist." *Even the name of their mist is stupid. These cats think they hold power. Well they are wrong.*

Spark's smirk faded to a soft smile, glad to have so easily ruffled the

immortal being's fur. "I bet I can still beat you in a fair fight."

Spectrum snorted. "Why don't you give it a try, I'll go easy on you." The black she cat dropped into a fighting stance, her claws itching to sink into the smug she cat's face.

"I might take that offer. Another time." Spark responded smoothly, sitting down on the damp floor of the pathway. "But right now, we need to talk."

"If you're here to stop me, you'll never succeed." Spectrum growled, rising from her battle stance. She stayed standing, glaring at the calm ginger she cat.

"We'll see about that." Spark's whiskers twitched in amusement.

"Yeah, we'll see how long it takes for me to cut you up into millions of little pieces." Spectrum muttered, finally seating herself before the other she cat.

"Relax," Spark purred, "I'm not here to fight."

"Doesn't mean I don't want to." Spectrum huffed back with a lash of her thin black tail.

"I'm only here to see what your intentions are." The light ginger she cat peered closer at Spectrum, her orbs glowing brighter. "Why are you speaking with Blossomfur?"

"None of your business." She turned her face away from Spark, snorting.

Spark repositioned herself so that she was in front of Spectrum again. "I'll ask you again. Why are you speaking with Blossomfur?"

"I was bored, saw the opportunity, and took it." Spectrum responded, baring her teeth at the ginger she cat. "What's your problem?"

"My problem is that you're turning Blossomfur against Shadeheart. You're manipulating her to take action in stealing the shadows from him and his mother." Spark let out a soft hiss as Spectrum moved to

attack.

"That's all her doing! I'm only giving her the push she needs!" Spectrum growled, once again standing up. She advanced on Spark with her green eyes beginning to glow. The two she cats' gleaming eyes cast a beautiful turquoise shine on the surrounding leaves and bushes, the tips of their own pelts also catching the light.

Spark hissed, taking a few steps back as Spectrum drew within attacking range.

Spectrum snarled and lunged for the ginger she cat, her claws swiping for her face. Spark leapt backwards, throwing up a sparkling wall of shining mist. Spectrum laughed and crashed through the mist with ease, feeling only a warm tickle as it sank onto her fur. "Your mist is powerless!"

Spark bared her teeth and unsheathed her claws. "My claws aren't!"

Spectrum growled and leapt for her again, swiping with both forepaws. Spark dodged the blows and clawed back, catching the black she cat's muzzle. Spectrum spat angrily at the ginger cat, lunging again. She swiped, missing again. Spark landed a blow to her shoulder.

The moment Spark's paw landed on her shoulder, Spectrum tunnelled deep inside her power and travelled back in time by only a few heartbeats. That simple jump took a lot out of her, but it was her winning strategy.

Once again, Spectrum lunged for Spark. She swiped in exactly the same place as before, missing. When Spark moved to attack her shoulder, Spectrum dodged and threw Spark to the ground.

Pinned under Spectrum, the ginger she cat went limp and hissed. "Don't you understand you're going to get someone killed with your stupid manipulating?"

"Well I hope it's that pile of scum NoName who dies." The black she cat sank her claws into her fur, still keeping her full weight on Spark. "A cat like her should never be given power."

"Glitch was foolish to give her the shadows." Spark agreed quietly, not struggling against the black she cat. "She was weak."

"She's *still* weak." Spectrum stepped off Spark and tore at the ground angrily. "I can't believe nobody's taking action in killing her! She's such an easy target!"

"She has allies." Spark countered, rising to her paws again.

"And with a swipe of a Promethean's paws they'd all be dead."

Spark paused. "Have you forgotten about Zephyr?"

"He'd jump ship the moment he saw things going down. That tom has no loyalty, he's only there for the show. Once it's over, he'll move onto the next." Spectrum growled.

"Then you go." Spark smiled slightly. "You attack NoName. You've just proven that a cat like you would be able to complete the job solo."

"No." Spectrum shook her head, sighing. "I can't. I'm not powerful enough." She already felt the exhaustion pulling at her limbs from the jump in time. There was no way she'd be able to launch an attack on the Dark Forest all on her own.

"Find a cat who is."

"I can only think of Zeye and he.." She frowned.

"He's the perfect choice." Spark replied. "Go find him and make him get off his rear and help the clans."

Spectrum laughed. "He'd kill me the moment he catches my scent."

"No-"

"Yes, that's how it works." Spectrum hissed, turning away from Spark. "Now leave me alone. I have things to do."

Spark followed. "You're still going to follow Blossomfur?"

"Of course." The black she cat growled. "You think you could change my mind just 'cause we have a common enemy?"

Spark nodded slightly.

"Well you're mistaken. Now leave before I deem you worthy of prey." Without waiting to see if Spark left, Spectrum blinked up into a tree to find a good place to rest.

Chapter 1

Blossomfur's POV:

"Make it stop! Make it stop!" The cream furred she cat gasped out, writhing in her nest as her stomach rippled painfully.

Shinewing's snappy reply echoed above her, the Lightclan medicine cat's voice barely registering through all the pain. "Keep still! Your first kit is nearly here."

Blossomfur wailed as pain flooded her, darkness swimming in her vision as she pushed to get the first kit out. She barely noticed the sturdy body at her back, or the warm golden eyes gazing down at her as she kitted. She didn't even hear his soft, reasuring words whisper in her ears.

"How much longer is she going to be yowling for?" Flamekit muttered from across the den. The ginger she kit's round orange eyes bore into Blossomfur, filled to the brim with frustration. "I'm tired and she's too loud!"

"Hush." Redleaf ordered, pushing her kit further into the curve of her belly. "Kitting is a hard time for any queen. You must not be rude."

Blossomfur couldn't even turn her head to look at Redleaf. Everything hurt. She gritted her teeth and managed to utter a small mew at Shinewing. "Get these things out of me quicker."

Shinewing snorted. "Your kits will take as much time as they need. Rushing them will not end well." Then, with a sigh, the medicine took a glance at the two guards hovering around them and meowed to the cream furred queen. "You'll be okay, I'm doing all I can to help." Her tail brushed against the herb pile she had brought with her.

Blossomfur wasn't reassured by Shinewing at all. *What if she's trying*

to kill my kits in revenge for her clan? That one thought haunted her no matter how much she tried to forget about it. Only the quiet words murmured into her ears from behind her kept Blossomfur calm; or, calmer.

The light furred she cat spared a glance at the tom behind her. Through her blurry gaze, she focused on his face. Shadeheart. The dark furred tom noticed her gaze and leaned down to nuzzle her gently. "It'll be over soon." He promised. "You'll be okay Blossomfur."

Blossomfur nodded, pulling away with a soft cry as the first kit finally fell onto the moss. Shinewing lunged for the kit, picking up the wet bundle in her jaws and laying it at Blossomfur's belly. The cream she cat leaned over and licked her first kit, a wide smile slowly rising on her lips as the kit suddenly let out a squeak and latched onto her muzzle.

Her brief moment of relief ended quickly as the second kit starting coming. It was easier than the first kit, and soon she had two mewling bundles fighting for her milk.

"Are there more?" Blossomfur wheezed, looking up at Shinewing as she fought to catch her breath.

Shinewing's paws ran over her belly, pushing gently at it. "I think there's one more on the way..." A few seconds later she gave a confirming nod. "Yes, there's one more kit in there."

Blossomfur let out a shaky breath, nodding as she shifted in her nest to prepare for the final kit. Shadeheart licked the back of her head lightly, his purring sending warm vibrations through her. *Why did I ever think that I could live without him by my side?* Blossomfur looked at her mate. "I forgive you." She whispered. "I forgive you, my love."

Shadeheart's face showed something of shock before he purred loudly. "Oh thank you Blossomfur. Thank you. I promise I will never upset you again." He buried his face in her scruff, mumbling his thanks over and over again. Shadeheart continued to thank Blossomfur even as she tensed up to deliver the third kit. It wasn't until she finally slumped in relief that the warrior looked over her

belly to peer at the three kits.

"A black she kit, a sandy tom and a grey she kit." Shadeheart purred. "They're beautiful."

Blossomfur smiled slightly, looking at the grey she kit in particular. Her fur was far from Bluesnow's blue-grey, thank the Dark Forest. It also wasn't like Flowerstream's brown-grey. It was more of a smokey grey, like the colour of the sky when it rained.

"I wonder what their eye colours will be." Shadeheart murmured, breaking through Blossomfur's thoughts.

"Hopefully your fiery golden eyes." Blossomfur purred at him.

"Or your stunning green." He countered, nuzzling her cheek.

She nuzzled him back. "Now what about names?"

"Shadowkit for the black one." Shadeheart immediately mewed.

Blossomfur blinked thoughtfully. "Shadowkit? Are you sure?"

"Yeah." Shadeheart nodded. "It's perfect for her."

"Alright." Blossomfur smiled. "How about Flintkit for the cream tom?"

Shadeheart nodded. "And the last she kit?"

"Cinderkit?"

The dark tom nodded again and purred. "Wonderful names."

Blossomfur smiled and hugged her kits closer to her, resting her head onto the nest. "They will be the best Dark Forest warriors ever. Your mother will be proud.."

Chapter 2

Shadeheart's POV:

The morning after Blossomfur's kitting, Shadeheart raised his head and looked around the nursery. The queens and kits were all fast asleep. *Perfect.* He knew how much Redleaf and her kits hated him for killing Curledtail only half a moon ago. Even Flowerstream had grown uneasy around him. But he understood why; no queen wanted a murderer close to her kits.

The dark furred tom eased himself out of Blossomfur's nest and stepped over her sleeping form. He gave his three kits a gentle nuzzle each, purring as Shadowkit's brown paws wrapped around him. "Shhh." He urged the black she kit to stay quiet so that she didn't wake anyone up. He wanted to leave without causing any trouble.

"Shadeheart..?" Bluesnow's whisper made his ears prick.

Shadeheart glanced at the blue she cat and padded silently over to her. "Hm?" He murmured softly.

"Are you.. okay?" She asked, her deep blue eyes not meeting him.

"Yes.. Why?"

"Blossomfur.. Blossomfur is a good cat, but.. she's hurting you." She mumbled in a hushed and careful voice

Shadeheart's eyes narrowed and he immediately dropped into a defensive tone. "No she's not. She's perfect, I love her."

"You may not realise it but-"

"No." Shadeheart shook his head. "Look, Bluesnow. I love you, and I can't wait for our kits to arrive. But I love Blossomfur as well and I know how much she needs me. I can't just leave her." He could never bring himself to leave Blossomfur, no matter what she did to

him. He knew she needed him and that she loved him with all her heart. Bluesnow was just jealous.

Bluesnow nodded, frowning at him. "Alright, I understand."

Shadeheart pressed his nose to her head. "I'm sorry. That was harsh of me."

"No it's fine." The blue she cat smiled softly at him. "I just worry for you sometimes. Someone has to."

Shadeheart chuckled. "You don't need to worry. I'm fine, I promise."

"I'll never stop worrying." She whispered, lowering her head to her paws.

Shadeheart sighed. "Well I really should go now. The hunting patrol will be waiting."

"I hope you're hunting prey on this patrol, not cats." Bluesnow giggled as he turned to leave.

"Oh don't worry. We're just hunting prey." Shadeheart smiled, knowing full well how much of a lie that was.

"Alright, all of you." Strike paced before the patrol, his red eyes unusually stern. "We're on the hunt for any cats trespassing over the border. If we find anyone, you'll capture them and bring them to me. I'll decide what we do with them."

"NoName has given us orders to recruit any cats with potential. She wants new warriors to join her ranks." Flare added, her yellow gaze burning holes through Shadeheart, Blazeheart, Nightwhisper and Stormcloud. "Understand?"

The four young warriors nodded.

"Then let's go." Strike spead his wings and flew up out of camp, into the trees. "Follow me!"

Flare bounded out of the camp exit and launched herself up a tree, her injured wings propelling her upwards. Shadeheart blinked in surprise. "Are we travelling in the trees?"

"Yep." Flare responded, resting on a low branch. "Up in the trees we hold the advantage. Anyway, you lot need more tree climbing practice."

Stormcloud grumbled loudly and stared up at Flare. "Not fair! I can't climb!"

"Stop complaining." The golden she cat replied before standing up and leaping to the next branch. "C'mon! Try to keep up!"

Shadeheart took the lead, clawing his way up to the branch Flare had just leapt from. He steadied himself before following the winged she cat, bounding from branch to branch. He wobbled on some, but managed to stay mostly balanced. He silently thanked NoName for teaching him how to successfully tree climb, because without her intensive training he'd be just like Stormcloud, who was still stuck on the first branch.

"I'll fall!" The grey dappled tom wailed as he clung to the branch.

"I won't let you fall." Blazeheart growled, his tail lashing with frustration as he waited on the branch ahead of Stormcloud.

"Promise?" Stormcloud mewed as he crouched down for the jump.

"Promise." Blazeheart muttered.

Stormcloud launched himself from the branch, his forepaws outstretched for the next branch. Shadeheart gasped as he saw the grey tom begin to fall too early. He was going to miss the branch! But just before Shadeheart got ready to leap to the rescue, barely visible dark blue mist formed under Stormcloud. The mist gave the grey tom the little push he needed to stay on course and the young tom landed successfully on the branch beside Blazeheart.

"Whoo!" Stormcloud gasped, clutching the branch with his claws. "I made it!"

"You did indeed." Blazeheart replied, already making his way towards Shadeheart. Nightwhisper followed her brother's lead, not looking back to see if Stormcloud could manage the next jumps.

Shadeheart let the siblings pass, waiting for Stormcloud to catch up. When he reached the dark tom, he asked. "Hey, did you see that mist?"

Stormcloud paused and looked at him like he was crazy. "What mist?"

Shadeheart shifted his paws with a nervous chuckle. "Er, nothing. Guess I was just seeing things."

Stormcloud broke his stare and shrugged. "Well, let's catch up to the others then."

Chapter 3

Shadeheart's POV:

Shadeheart and Stormcloud finally made it to the border. Flare was perched atop a high branch with Strike grooming himself beside her. Blazeheart and Nightwhisper were seated a few branches down, their faces cool.

"What're we waiting for?" Stormcloud grumbled, his claws digging into the wood impatiently.

"That." Strike flicked his tail in the direction of the moorland ahead of them. Shadeheart peered at the area his uncle pointed at and noticed a slight movement within the tall grass. A group of cats were stalking right towards them.

"How did you know they'd be coming?" Shadeheart muttered, looking up at the winged tom.

"We've been following their movements for a while." The Enforcer shrugged. "They've taken an interest in our forest."

"Now it's time to capture them." Flare smirked, her thick golden tail lashing with excitement.

Stormcloud grinned from beside Shadeheart. "Yes! Something exciting!"

"Do we have permission to kill the troublesome ones?" Blazeheart asked, whiskers twitching.

"That's my job." Strike responded sternly. "But you may use any force necessary for proper co-operation."

Blazeheart nodded, his blue eyes blinking lazily as he turned to watch the approaching enemies. Shadeheart admired the golden warrior's nonchalance in the face of battle; even if it were a simple border skirmish.

"Get ready." Flare murmured. "And stay hidden. They're nearly here." The golden she cat tucked herself further into the shadows, her wings curling around her like a shield. Strike stayed where he was, easily camouflaged with his black and red pelt. The younger warriors followed the Enforcers' leads and slunk into cover behind leaves and other branches, making sure they were not spotted.

Their targets finally emerged from the cover of the tall grass. Three tom cats and a she cat. They looked scrawny, but muscles rippled under their thin, patchy fur and fierce battle scars littered their pelts. The she cat was in the lead with a scornful expression plastered on her face, wrinkling a nasty scar on the bridge of her nose. Her companions followed in respectful silence, their gleaming eyes on a careful lookout for danger. They didn't look into the trees, thank Starclan.

"Ready.." Strike murmured, his voice a whisper in the breeze.

Shadeheart tensed as the rogues padded underneath their tree. He looked up at Strike to see his uncle nodding at them. It was time to attack!

Blazeheart went first, diving from his branch with a battle cry. Nightwhisper and Stormcloud followed his lead, dropping onto the rogues. Shadeheart hesitated for a second, gasping as he saw the fight quickly unfold. The she cat whirled around to see her three companions being ambushed and immediately lunged to help.

Shadeheart sprung into action. He leapt from his branch and landed on the she cat's back before she could claw Stormcloud's haunches. She screeched in fury and shook herself, easily throwing Shadeheart off with an amazing amount of hidden strength.

Once Shadeheart was on the ground, he leapt to his paws and charged for her. The rogue snarled, her fur bristling. "Give it your best shot, forest cat!"

The dark furred warrior hissed. "I'm not even trying!" He swiped at her, but she ducked away with surprising grace. She slithered away from every attack he threw at her.

She's trying to tire me out! Shadeheart realised with a jolt, immediately backing away from the rogue she cat.

"Scared?" She taunted, her thin tawny fur bushing up in anger.

"No!" He growled back with a lash of his tail. *How do I get her to attack first?* He wondered anxiously, shifting on his paws as she paced around him. Behind them, his clan mates were still fighting the other rogues. Why weren't Strike or Flare helping? The fight would be over in seconds if they joined in!

"Alright time to end this." The rogue she cat snarled and lunged for Shadeheart. He was nearly thrown off his paws, but her warning gave him just enough time to duck down, his chest pushing hard against the ground. Hissing in surprise, the rogue sailed right over his head. She tried to twist around and claw at him but ended up landing awkwardly on her paws, stumbling and falling to her knees.

Shadeheart snapped to his paws and pounced on the she cat, shoving her to the ground. "Surrender now!" He snarled in her face, his foreclaws digging into her back.

The rogue wriggled and struggled. "Never! You'll have to kill me!"

"Fine!" Shadeheart sank his claws deeper into her skin. She didn't even flinch. *She's really tough. Twolegplace must be a harsh place to live in.*

"Shadeheart." Strike's paws were suddenly visible on the ground beside him and he glanced up to see his Uncle standing next to him. "That's enough. Leave the torturing to us." The black and red tom gave him a sick grin and pushed the young warrior off the rogue. Before she could attempt an escape, she was pinned down again.

Shadeheart stepped back as Strike began speaking to the she cat. The other intruders had been captured successfully. Flare had gathered them into a tight circle, stalking around them menacingly. Although her wings were useless for flying, the crooked one gave her a frightening look. It helped force the rogues into submission.

"Now what?" Blazeheart muttered, padding to Shadeheart's side

with a lash of his tail.

"We bring them to camp." Strike grabbed the she cat by her scruff and launched himself into the air.

A/N

HELP I NEED MOTIVATION

PLeaSe suggest some random ships for the crack ships book or something you'd like to see in Lightclan Shorts. Those two really need updating.

I'll try to get a new chapter up on here every 2-3 days???

Thanks for being patient. I'm sure I'll find my motivation again some day.

Chapter 4

Silvershy's POV:

"Someone's coming!" Wrenpaw hissed, darting deeper into the shadows of the Prison. The other prisoners followed the apprentice's lead, bunching together near the back of the dark den. Silvershy flattened her ears, sitting up from her spot by the far side of the den and peering over at the gleaming den entrance.

Moments later, Strike stalked into the den, his red eyes scanning over the Clan prisoners. "You lot have some new friends." The winged tom stepped aside to reveal four rogues being pushed into the den. "Play nice, I'll be disappointed if I have to kill any of you today."

Silvershy stared at the new cats with round green eyes. Their heads were hung in defeat, their pelts riddled with wounds. But the she cat in the lead still had a furious fire burning in her pale green eyes.

Behind the rogues, Shadeheart padded inside with a plump rabbit and mouse in his jaws. "Food for the prisoners." The dark tom murmured, dropping the fresh kill in the space between the rogues and Clan prisoners.

Strike shot Shadeheart a fierce glare. "That rabbit was meant for the Enforcers."

"The prisoners deserve a little treat." Shadeheart held his Uncle's stare, stepping away from his gift. "And I can always go out again to catch more rabbits."

Silvershy blinked at Shadeheart. Why was he still risking his life by helping them? All he achieved was more punishment to himself and the prisoners. *He should be waiting for the time to strike! Not showing everyone how unloyal to his mother he is!* It was an effort to hold back a growl.

"Leave." Strike muttered, lashing his tail at Shadeheart. The young warrior dipped his head and slunk back out into the main clearing. Silvershy watched him go with a barely audible sigh, wondering if she would ever be able to leave the Prison and to go back to normal clan life.

Shaking her head, the silver she cat looked around at her clanmates. All eyes were glued to the rabbit. Their tongues rasped over their jaws hungrily. Not even the plumpest of rabbits would satisfy all the hungry prisoners.

"Oh, this is going to be interesting." Strike grinned, noticing the starved looks on the Prisoners' faces. "Go ahead, the rabbit's all yours."

Silvershy bit back a shriek as cats immediately began shoving past her, everyone desperate to grab the rabbit sitting only pawsteps away. The silver she cat pressed herself hard against the den wall, baring her teeth in disgust. They were acting like rabid foxes!

Closer to Strike, the new rogues darted away with hisses and snarls as the starved warriors all piled on the rabbit at once. The mouse was trampled under the cats, soon rendering it inedible.

As the hungry prisoners ripped and tore through the soft rabbit flesh, Silvershy quickly lost her hunger. She glanced around the den to see one of the sick cats, Briarcloud, writhing in pain on the ground. One of the she cat's hind leg's had been trampled on and broken during the mad rush.

Silvershy peeled herself away from the den wall and padded to the Echoclan she cat's side. "Hey, it's okay, we'll get it fixed."

"That's right, we will." Marigoldfur appeared in the edge of her vision, some cobwebs already in her jaws. "I haven't got much," the medicine cat sat down by the broken leg, "but it's enough."

"No, no." Briarcloud whimpered and attempted to shuffle away. "Don't waste all the cobwebs. We can just use.. Moss or something else for me."

Silvershy sighed. "She has a point."

Marigoldfur growled. "I'm not letting her die of this injury."

"I won't!" Briarcloud mewed, but she was ignored.

Marigoldfur had already started wrapping the cobwebs around her broken leg, securing it in a brace. "We need comfrey." The medicine stated with a grumble. "But this will hold it."

A fierce snarl interrupted them, and Silvershy snapped her head in the direction of it to see two of the prisoners exchanging some violent blows, a tiny morsel of rabbit sitting between them. She looked at Strike. The Enforcer watched with a crazy grin.

"Stop this!" Beechpaw wailed, trying to get in between the two fighting cats. The scrawny apprentice was flung away and the two warriors continued to fight for the single mouthful of rabbit.

We have to get out of here before we forget who we used to be! Even if NoName eventually is killed, there will be nothing to go back to! Silvershy bared her teeth and snapped. "Stop fighting!"

The warriors paused and looked at her, panting and bleeding from their fight. Cedarclaw and Ripplenose. They were both from Smallclan, could something as simple as a rabbit tear these life-long clanmates apart?

"Aw, such a killjoy." Strike rose to his paws, lashing his tail at Silvershy. "Even without your powers you still like to cause trouble. Watch out, because you might be the next one to be executed." The black and red tom turned and left the den, leaving the prisoners to sort their troubles alone.

The new rogues were standing far away from the clan cats, horrified expressions on their faces. "Will we turn into that?" One of the toms asked with wide yellow eyes.

"Of course not!" The rogue she cat snapped and sank her claws into the ground. "We're not weak like them."

"Excuse me?" Silvershy hissed, stepping closer to the rogues.

The she cat twitched her whiskers. "You're not that bad, I have to admit. What are you, their leader?"

Silvershy snorted. "No. Our leaders are dead."

"There was more than one leader?" The rogue pricked her ears.

"We're the remains of four great Clans." Marigoldfur explained. "We've been under the Dark Forest's rule for over four seasons now."

"That's a shame." One of the toms muttered. "We won't be staying that long, we're escaping right?"

The she cat shrugged. "We'll have to devise a plan."

Silvershy's ear pricked. "Yes. A plan." She felt her heart fluttering in her chest at the thought. "We can escape."

"You're not coming." The rogue she cat growled and glared at her. "You'll ruin the plan."

Her heart plummeted in her chest. "No, you have to let us help you." Silvershy stepped closer, her eyes staring into the she cat.

"How can we trust you?" One of the toms pushed her back with his paws.

Silvershy stumbled backwards and glanced behind her at her clanmates. They had resolved the conflicts over the food, and the rabbit's mangled carcass lay strewn about the den. The prisoners had wasted no time in stripping off every whisker-length of flesh from the prey. They needed to escape, they had to. Before it was too late.

The silver she cat turned back to the rogues. "Alright, here's the deal. We work as a team, all of us, and create a plan of escape. If we fail, you kill me."

Chapter 5

Blossomfur's POV:

Night approached. Blossomfur sighed as she groomed her three kits, smiling as they squirmed against her hold. "Hush my little ones. You must look your best for your father's return."

Shadowkit squeaked and pawed at her muzzle, her soft claws poking and pulling her fur. Blossomfur purred and nudged the she kit away just as Flintkit climbed unsteadily onto her back. "Flintkit!" She giggled softly. "What are you doing?" The light she cat twisted her head around to look at her kit. He had settled down on her back, mewing quietly to himself.

Blossomfur rolled her eyes. Only Cinderkit did as she was told. The light grey she kit was napping in the curve of her belly, silent and still. *She's going to be a very docile cat when she's older.* Blossomfur sighed. *I wonder if she'll be able to keep up with the harsh Dark Forest life.*

"Of course you will." She murmured in reply to herself. "Won't you?" She ran her tail along Cinderkit's spine, smiling as the kit purred in response.

Blossomfur looked up as Shadeheart stepped into the nursery cave. He smiled at her and padded to her side. "How are they?" He asked once he'd reached her, nuzzling her gently.

"They still haven't opened their eyes yet." Blossomfur murmured, sighing.

"They're only one day old. Give them time." The dark furred tom chuckled and joined her in her nest. Blossomfur smiled, grateful for the return of his warmth beside her. She was so glad things were back to normal between them. He had learnt his lesson, he'd stay loyal to her from now on.

A purr rumbled in her throat and she stretched, grinning as Shadeheart's tongue glided over the back of her head. The cream she cat glanced across the den at Bluesnow. The Lightclan filth was watching them with narrowed eyes. Blossomfur smirked at the other she cat, joy rising within her as she watched the blue she cat turn her head away with an angry scowl.

Shadeheart had already closed his eyes; he didn't notice the death glares being exchanged around the den. Even Flowerstream sent her fair share of glares in Blossomfur's direction.

That's right. The light furred queen smiled. *I've got Shadeheart all to myself. None of you can have him anymore. He is mine!*

Shadeheart's POV:

Shadeheart woke to the sound of thunder rumbling in the distance. The young warrior grumbled and lifted his head from where it was rested against Blossomfur's shoulder.

It was still dark and he was the only one awake. Even the kits were undisturbed from the oncoming storm.

Shadeheart sighed and lifted himself to his paws, giving his pelt a brief shake. His movement stirred his kits and Shadowkit started moving. Luckily she stilled after a few attempts to escape the warm bundle of fur that made Blossomfur's belly.

After giving each of his three kits a small nuzzle, Shadeheart padded to the nursery tunnel. He glanced at Bluesnow as he passed her. She was resting peacefully, her bloated belly rising and falling rhythmically. Their kits would be arriving soon.

Shadeheart noticed a pair of eyes staring at him in the darkness. He glanced at Redleaf's nest to see Flamekit's fiery amber gaze glaring at him from the shelter of her mother's belly. He shivered. Even as a kit she was terrifying. The deadly stillness in the little she kit's body seemed unnatural, as if she were a warrior trapped inside a cute body.

Shadeheart turned his head away from Flamekit, wondering if she'd ever forgive him for killing her father. He didn't want to be subjected to that glare again when she grew older.

Hurrying out of the nursery, Shadeheart emerged into the cool early morning air. The sky was grey with thick, dark clouds drawing closer from the horizon.

"Beautiful day, hm?" NoName appeared by her son's side, her pure white gaze glued to the sky.

"Er, yes." Shadeheart stammered, looking at the red she cat.

There was a loud squeak beside NoName and Shadeheart blinked in surprise, peering over her shoulder to see Velvet crouched beside her, a bramble tendril wrapped tightly around the little bunny's body. "Uh.."

"She needs a walk." NoName replied, looking down at her bunny companion. "The thorns on the bramble keeps her from attempting escape."

"Okay..." Shadeheart murmured, once again turning his gaze back to the sky. *She's turning the Dark Forest into one big joke.*

"You're on patrol again today, with Strike and Coldkit." The red she cat suddenly said, her white gaze turning to him.

"Same as yesterday?"

His mother nodded. "We need to strengthen our forces in case of an attack."

Shadeheart nodded with a sigh. "Alright, NoName."

Chapter 6

Silvershy's POV:

"We have to wait for the perfect moment to strike." Vixen was saying as she glided her tongue over her dark red paw. The calm rogue she cat moved with deadly grace. She spoke carefully, calculating every word. It gave Silvershy an uneasy feeling in her stomach. She was in the presence of a true, ruthless leader of rogues. Capturing Vixen and her followers was either a grave mistake or a perfect alliance for NoName.

Silvershy shifted her paws from where she was settled in her small nest, tail lashing. "And when will that be?"

"Impatient filth." One of the other rogues hissed. Silvershy hadn't caught the names of Vixen's companions yet; they rarely ever spoke.

"Watch it." The silver she cat bared her teeth in response, earning low growls from the three toms.

A single lash of Vixen's tail settled the tension in the air and the two she cats returned to making their plan.

"When do they feed you?" Vixen asked, eyes narrowed in thought.

"There's no fixed time or quantity." Silvershy muttered back. She could feel the warm gazes of her fellow prisoners glued to her. They trusted her to withhold Vixen's trust and to help them escape. *We'll be Clans once more.* Silvershy promised them all silently, half wondering if Starclan still heeded their calls.

Vixen broke through her thoughts, whiskers twitching. "How many guards are at the entrance?"

"Two. They switch at dawn and dusk."

"So there's two at night, two in the day." Vixen murmured, watching as Silvershy nodded in confirmation. "Alright... Are they just as the

entrance?"

"Mostly. But after an attempted attack, they have started to take rounds around the den to check for holes."

"Do you know if there are any particularly weak cats who sometimes guard?" The rogue she cat asked.

"Only the strongest are chosen as guards." The silver she cat replied slowly. "But there's a cat who is on our side.. I think.."

"The tom who brought you the rabbit?" Vixen guessed immediately.

"Yes, Shadeheart. How'd you know?"

"Cats aren't usually nice to their prisoners, and they especially don't go against their Enforcer's wishes just for the benefit of some lowly, half-starved mouse-brains like you lot."

Silvershy bit back a hiss, wanting so badly to somehow show Vixen how much stronger they were as a normal, healthy clan. She stayed quiet, however.

"If Shadeheart is capable enough, he could be of some importance to our plan." Vixen meowed. "When does he visit?"

"Again, no set time. He just arrives."

"There's no order!" One of the toms growled. "It disgusts me."

"Quiet, Rook." Vixen snarled, causing the tom to snap his gaze to her. Rook's tawny head dipped and he grew quiet once again, becoming a mere a shadow behind the dark red she cat.

Shadeheart's POV:

The shrew's wild screeching made Shadeheart's ears ring. He growled. "Stop that! Put it out of its misery already!"

Coldkit laughed insanely, his eyes glowing in the gloomy light.

Clouds had covered the sky, leaving it a depressing grey. The storm was approaching fast. "Are you crazy? This is fun!" The little white tom batted at his wounded prey that writhed on the floor before him.

How can NoName have a cat like Coldkit in her ranks? He's crazy. Having died as a kit many seasons ago, the Dark Forest dweller was surely insane. Shadeheart shook his head, looking at Strike for assistance.

His uncle was grinning as well. "Let the kit have his fun. He doesn't get out much."

"I'm not a kit!" The white tom snarled, suddenly snapping the shrew's neck. Shadeheart jumped in surprise, not realising it was such a touchy subject.

"Then what are you, *Coldkit?"* Strike smirked mischievously.

"Shut up or i'll tear your throat out!"

"All talk and no action." Strike stepped closer and nudged the small tom with his wing claw. "You adorable fluffball."

Coldkit made the most outraged yowl Shadeheart had ever heard, and launched himself at Strike. The two toms fell in a writhing mess of white, black and red fur.

Shadeheart watched in bewilderment. They were supposed to be on patrol, not fighting.

As the two warriors tussled on the ground, a grey bunny suddenly bolted at them, landing ontop of Coldkit. Shadeheart felt like knocking his head on a rock. Was he dreaming?

The strange bunny tore at Coldkit's ears, making the white tom roll off Strike to look at the angry fluff on his back.

"You're back!" Strike shrieked, snapping to his paws and grabbing the bunny in a hug. "You're so cute!"

"Let go of me!" The bunny snarled, turning into a burst of red mist

before reappearing as Zephyr.

Shadeheart had sat back to watch, eyes wide and body stiff. *Did that rabid bunny just turn into Zephyr...?*

"Zephyr. What a.. wonderful.. surprise. How was your trip?" Coldkit muttered, pawing at his bleeding ears.

"Fine."

"Just fine?" Strike gaped at him. "Tell me more!"

"I've gathered the information needed for NoName. That is all." The grey tom glared at both cats. They all completely ignored Shadeheart, thankfully.

"What was the bunny burrow like? Did they accept you as one of their own?" Strike asked.

"Oh yes." Zephyr smiled slyly. "I made a few friends in there."

"You should've sacrificed them to us for food!" Coldkit hissed.

"Nah, too lazy." The Enforcer turned to leave. "Now I'll be at camp to tell the story of my amazing adventure. See you two later." Then he blinked away just as thunder rumbled in the distant skies.

Chapter 7

Blossomfur's POV:

"Come on little ones, you're going to see rain for the first time!" Blossomfur purred as she carefully led her litter of kits to the nursery tunnel.

Flintkit was riding on her head, his little claws pricking her skin. Shadowkit and Cinderkit stumbled around her paws, their wide eyes taking in their new environment. They'd only just opened their eyes that morning, and all three were eager to explore. Flintkit had his father's beautiful golden gaze and Shadowkit and Cinderkit had Blossomfur's vibrant green. Shadeheart was still on patrol and had yet to see his kits' opened eyes.

Flamekit and Snowkit watched them as they left; Flamekit had her tongue sticking out at Blossomfur and her kits. Blossomfur flattened her ears. Redleaf needed to teach her kits to be less rude. *But I wouldn't expect a stupid Clan prisoner like her to be a good mother anyway.*

"Going out into the rain?" Flowerstream asked from the other side of the den, looking at Blossomfur's kits as they waddled by.

"Yes, it's time they explored their home." Blossomfur replied, looking down at the older queen. She had six kits to handle, and they were all napping soundly in the curve of her belly. Flowerstream was a good mother. *Redleaf should take advice from her.*

"Be careful." Flowerstream murmured. "Don't want them catching a cold."

"They won't. They're strong." Blossomfur smiled proudly at her kits. "Aren't you?"

"Yeah!" Shadowkit squeaked, bounding ahead. Cinderkit followed

her sister, but ended up tripping and falling with a wail.

Blossomfur gasped and reached her forepaw out for the grey she kit, easing her back to her paws. "Are you alright?"

Cinderkit nodded up at her mother before following Shadowkit, slowly this time.

Flintkit's light snoring could be heard in Blossomfur's ear. She smiled slightly as she picked her way carefully up the tunnel and out into the main clearing.

The sky was dark. Rain poured from the clouds, lightning flashing in the distance and thunder rumbling. Blossomfur frowned, staying under cover. Shadowkit and Cinderkit followed her lead, hovering by the wall of falling rain. Flintkit was still napping on Blossomfur's head.

Shadowkit reached out tentatively with one paw, squeaking as rain dropped onto her outstretched limb. "It's cold!" She backed away behind Cinderkit, giving her sister a push. "You try!"

Cinderkit had a similar reaction, darting behind Blossomfur's hind legs to hide. "Why is the sky so mean to us?" She wailed.

"It's not normally like this." Blossomfur meowed. "Usually the sky is a clear, bright blue. And the sun is nice and warm."

"Will it be like that tomorrow?" Shadowkit asked with round eyes.

"Hopefully." Blossomfur responded, looking up at the setting sun. *Shadeheart's patrol should be returning soon.*

As if on cue, Strike flew into camp, landing on the ground and sprinting for the warriors den. Shadeheart and Coldkit trotted after the Enforcer. Coldkit was carrying a shrew and he deposited it in the prey pile before darting after Strike. Shadeheart veered off to join Blossomfur.

"What are you doing? The kits will catch colds!" The black warrior gave her a slight push deeper into the nursery tunnel.

"They're fine." Blossomfur hissed back, giving Shadeheart a glare.

He noticed her glare and immediately stopped pushing her, ears flattening apologetically. "I just worry for them... And you." He looked down at Shadowkit and Cinderkit, his gaze brightening slightly. "They've opened their eyes!"

"They have." Blossomfur smiled, leaning down to nuzzle her two she kits. By doing so, Flintkit slipped off her head and she gasped as he fell onto his sisters. "Flintkit!"

The cream furred tom squealed and opened his eyes in fright, rolling off his sisters.

"I forgot you were asleep up there." Blossomfur mumbled, licking the little tom. "I'm sorry."

Flintkit nuzzled her back. "It's okay."

Shadeheart purred and leaned down to look at his three kits. "They're even more beautiful with their eyes open."

Blossomfur purred as well, wrapping her tail around her litter. "Shall we head back into the nursery?"

"Yeah!" Shadowkit squeaked. "It's cold out here!"

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Shadeheart's POV:

They headed back into the nursery and the three kits tumbled into their nest with squeals of joy. Shadeheart purred, trying to ignore the stares from the other den residents. Only Bluesnow seemed happy to give him a welcoming flick of her tail, making sure Blossomfur didn't see her gesture.

As Shadeheart sat down next to Blossomfur's nest to watch the kits play, Flowerstream's bundles started to stir from their nap. Jaykit rolled out of the nest, looking up at Blossomfur's kits. "Can I play?" The little kit asked eagerly, tumbling towards the three. His nestmates followed his lead and soon the six kits were swarming

Shadowkit, Cinderkit and Flintkit.

Shadeheart watched, tense. If any of his kits were hurt he was ready to intervene. The older kits were more rough, but they still played nicely enough. He could see Blossomfur was also on edge, but she hid it well.

Lightning suddenly crashed above their heads, quickly followed by thunder. Shadeheart hissed in surprise, the other nursery residents letting out squeaks and growls of their own.

"Did lightning hit the camp?" Blossomfur wondered with narrowed eyes.

"I'll go check." Shadeheart sighed, hurrying out of the nursery and into the main clearing. The rain lashed the ground violently, pouring down from the dark sky. Thunder rumbled loudly above him; the worst of the storm was ontop of them.

The camp was empty, but a pair of terrified red eyes peered at him from the warriors den. It was Strike. The Enforcer lifted a paw, waving him over. Shadeheart grumbled softly before launching himself into the rain, darting across the clearing and into the den.

Strike hissed. "Don't shake water on me!"

"You're the one that called me over." Shadeheart growled back at his Uncle, shaking his wet pelt.

Strike flattened his ears. "Did you see that lightning strike?"

"No, that's what I was investigating." Shadeheart replied.

"It hit the tree right next to camp." The red and black tom meowed, shivering as he glanced back out at the rain.

"You called me over to tell me that?"

"He's woken everyone up. Mouse-brain." Tyler's voice grumbled from the darkness of the den.

"Fox-breath!" Strike hissed back at his brother.

"Why can't you just sleep?" Shadeheart sighed, licking his damp pelt.

"You think anyone can sleep in this storm?" Strike muttered.

"Yes." Many mews came from the den.

Strike lashed his tail. "Shut up."

"Look, Strike, you should just sleep." Shadeheart sighed heavily. "I'm going back to the nursery."

"Wait!" Strike blocked the entrance. "Stay."

"Yeah, stop running off to Blossomfur all the time.." Dime mumbled, yawning in his nest.

"But she's my mate.." Shadeheart responded.

"And NoName's my mate." Dime sprawled onto his back. "But I'm sleeping here tonight, thanks to her obsession with Velvet."

Shadeheart shook his head. "It's different, she needs me-"

"No she doesn't. Now stay here or I'll send you into the Prison." Dime suddenly growled.

Shadeheart sank his claws into the ground, but dipped his head to his father. "Fine."

Chapter 8

Silvershy's POV:

"All of you up and on your feet!" The guard snarled as he strode into the Prison, kicking the prisoners closest to him.

Silvershy staggered to her paws, looking at the guard as he shoved Vixen out of her nest. The rogue she cat snarled and lashed out at him, her claws catching his cheek. The white tom roared in anger, swiping for her, but the other three rogues darted in front of their leader and shielded her from the attack.

"I'll have you all killed!" The guard hissed, taking a few steps back.

"No you will not." Dime and NoName strode into the den, the two leaders glaring at the white tom. "Go back to your post." Dime snarled at him.

The guard flattened his ears and slunk away.

Silvershy glanced at Vixen. The rogue she cat was seething at NoName and Dime, her claws tearing at the old moss that made up her nest. The silver she cat edged closer to calm the dark red she cat but Arno and Sparrow beat her to it. Rook gave Silvershy a sideways glance through narrowed eyes. The Lightclan warrior knew better than to interfere.

"We're only here for the newest additions to the den." NoName mewed, looking at Vixen and her companions. "We want you to join us. You'll receive a life of luxury if you pledge allegiance to me."

Vixen immediately growled. "You're lying."

"Why would I lie?" NoName asked, looking mildly surprised. The red she cat glared at the rogue, her glowing white eyes burning through her. "Are you telling me you would prefer to be imprisoned?"

"Yes. We all do." Vixen responded, keeping a strong stance before the small she cat.

"All four of you?" Dime glanced at Rook, Sparrow and Arno. "Are you sure?"

Silvershy watched tensely as the three toms glanced at each other nervously. They weren't actually considering it were they?

"We..." Rook began with a small twitch of his whiskers. "We want to join you, NoName."

Silvershy watched as Vixen's expression morphed into complete horror and disgust. "You what?!" She snarled, turning on her companions.

"Think about it." Sparrow mewed. "We'll get a life of luxury. Who cares who we serve under."

"NoName is a monster!" Silvershy growled at the rogues, keeping a close eye on the red she cat for a reaction.

"What's she done? Killed a few cats?" Rook scoffed. "You don't know how many we've killed under Vixen's orders."

"It's a hard life on the streets." Dime meowed. "But as a loyal warrior of the Dark Forest you'll live a worry-free life."

Arno nodded. "We accept. We'll join you."

As the conversation went on, Vixen was seething with rage. Silvershy stared at the dark red she cat with wide eyes. What was she going to do?

Arno took a step towards NoName, brushing past Vixen. Within a blink of an eye Vixen had reared up, her claws swiping for her friend. A shining arc of blood sprayed through the air, landing squarely on Dime. Then Arno's pained wail filled the air.

The rogue tom collapsed on his belly, blood pouring from the deep slice marks on his neck. Vixen towered over him, panting faintly, her claws dripping with dark crimson blood. "Traitors deserve to

die." She snarled at Arno, shoving his face into the ground with a paw as he bled out.

"Impressive." Dime murmured, striding closer to the growling she cat. "Are you sure you don't want to join us? You might even get a place as an Enforcer." The dark furred tom kicked aside Arno's body, the dying rogue letting out a final wheeze before going still.

Vixen took a shaky breath and looked straight at Dime, her muzzle level with his. "Fine, I'll join you. But I *will* be an Enforcer. You will respect me. Any cat who treats me with disrespect will be slain." Then she turned and padded past the two leaders and out of the prison. Nobody moved to stop her.

Once everyone had left the den and the body had been disposed of, the prisoners started talking.

"She abandoned us!" Dapplegrey hissed, lashing her thin tail. "I knew we couldn't trust a filthy rogue like her!"

Silvershy looked at the older she cat. "But.. Maybe.. Maybe this is part of her plan?"

"Fox-dung!" Dapplegrey hissed back, tearing at her damp nest.

Shinewing rested her tail on the Lightclan she cat's back. "Calm down. It's not that bad. We can still do this alone. We are strong."

"Yeah, sure we are." The Lightclan warrior glanced around the den. Silvershy followed her gaze. Not one prisoner looked strong enough for a battle.

Shinewing sighed softly and hung her head. "We can't give up."

"Maybe we should." A Ravenclan tom mumbled. "There's nothing left for us here. Our leaders are dead, our territories gone.."

"If only another one of those great waves could come and wipe out the Dark Forest." Another Ravenclan she cat meowed, leaning against the tom.

"And us along with them."

Silvershy flattened her ears. "Enough of this talk." She felt the gazes of the prisoners turn to her. "I will make sure we survive. I'll make sure we escape from NoName's clutches. We will make it." The silver warrior padded to the front of the group, facing them all. "We can't give up!"

Her words were met with silence. Nobody believed her anymore. Everyone's hope had shattered.

"Stop living in a fantasy, Silvershy." Dapplegrey huffed. "It's over."

A/N

A special POVs chapter is on the way! Comment any particular POVs you'd like to see in it. ;P

Chapter 9

Shadeheart's POV:

He was snapped awake from his nap by a terrible wail coming from the Prison.

Racing from the nursery, the dark furred tom dove into the Prison to see what was going on. Inside the den, he was met with darkness. Through the gloom he saw the prison guard standing over a body. It was one of the Smallclan warriors. "Blazestream!" He gasped, looking at the guard. "Did you kill him, Petal?"

Petal shook her head. "He killed himself." The lithe she cat meowed bitterly. "I couldn't stop him."

Shadeheart swallowed thickly, his golden eyes widening in shock. *Why did he do that?*

"They're breaking." Petal hissed, glaring at the prisoners. "You have to persuade your mother to do something about this. They've been here too long."

"I doubt she'll let them out." Shadeheart muttered, narrowing his eyes. Was Petal on the Clan's side?

"Then give them more food, more bedding. Give them hope." A slow smirk formed on her lips. "So we can rip it away and watch them snap and crumble."

Shadeheart's heart thumped loudly in his chest. So she wasn't on the Clan's side. How could someone be *that* cruel? He fought the urge to growl at the Dark Forest she cat. Fortunately Petal had spoken too softly for the prisoners to hear, otherwise the they probably would've tried to kill her.

"Report this to the Enforcers." Petal ordered, cutting through Shadeheart's thoughts. "Now!" Her voice made him jump and he

darted out of the den with a small hiss.

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Shadeheart soon returned to the Prison with the Enforcers in tow. He'd woken NoName and Dime as well. The young warrior took a step away to allow his parents to step in front.

"One of the prisoners killed himself." Petal reported, taking a seat near Shadeheart.

"Couldn't take it anymore, eh?" Dime sneered, glaring at the other prisoners who were huddled in the back of the den. "Weaklings."

"How are we weak when you've left us with nothing but death to free us?" Dapplegrey hissed, rising to her paws to meet the Dark Forest leaders. Shadeheart noticed NoName lean backwards, angling her body behind her mate for protection.

"I suggested we give them more food per day." Petal mewed, turning the gazes to her. "It should ease their broken souls."

Dime let out a thoughtful mumble as he turned to Shadeheart. "Do you agree?"

Shadeheart nodded silently. NoName's eyes burned with anger at his response. *So you get angry at me but not Petal? Stop treating me like a traitor.. Even though I am one.*

"I like that idea." Strike strode over to the prisoners, herding them into a tighter group. "What do you think, Clan scum? Want more food?"

Their heads all nodded in unison, but nobody spoke. Even Silvershy stayed quiet where she crouched at the edge.

"Yes. Let them have more food." Vixen, the newest Enforcer, smiled slyly at NoName and Dime. "More bedding too."

NoName bared her teeth at the dark ginger she cat. "Last I checked I make the decisions here."

Vixen's smile didn't faulter, but she dipped her head. "Very well."

Shadeheart watched the encounter, suddenly being reminded about Zephyr. Both Vixen and Zephyr had similar attitudes, although Vixen was more expressive and fiery. The black tom noticed Tyler staring at Vixen with narrowed eyes. In fact, almost everyone was staring at the proud rogue she cat.

"Fine," NoName murmured, "the prisoners will receive double of everything from now on."

The whole den seemed satisfied with the red she cat's decision and soon the Enforcers dispersed, leaving the den to the prisoners once again.

Shadeheart took his chance to leave as well, trotting back to see Blossomfur waiting expectantly for him, of course.

Chapter 10

Silvershy's POV:

Some time after the Enforcers left the prison, and Blazestream's body had been taken care of, Vixen strode confidently into the darkness.

Silvershy was the first to meet the red she cat, stopping her from walking further. "What do you want?" She demanded with a hostile growl.

"I'm here to tell you the plan." The Enforcer responded, keeping a calm stance. Her pale green eyes met Silvershy's emerald ones. "You can trust me." The rogue didn't break the stare, not until Silvershy took a slow step back.

"Why did you join them?" The Lightclan warrior's glare followed Vixen as she strode deeper into the den. "Are you that obsessed with power?" She challenged.

"I'm here to share the plan with you." The red rogue repeated, obviously growing frustrated.

Silvershy forced down the hope that seized her body and managed to force out a low hiss. "You abandoned us. You've lost our trust."

"Then your trust was weak." The scar on the bridge of her nose wrinkled in anger. "And that means our deal is over and you must die."

Silvershy darted away from Vixen as the rogue advanced on her. Memories of the way she had brutally murdered Arno flashed in her mind and the silver she cat gasped. "Wait, the deal is still on! Don't kill me yet!"

Vixen paused in her step, tail lashing against the floor. "Then shut up and listen to me." The bluntness in her voice made Silvershy

flinch, but she obeyed with a small sigh.

The orange-red she cat seated herself, as if to prove she felt comfortable in the presence of the prisoners. Her action appeared to calm the tension that had spiked in the air. Silvershy watched as the Clan cats settled back into their places, their eyes all glued to Vixen.

"I will remain an Enforcer." Vixen began, going straight to the point. "As an Enforcer I hold sufficient power in this dung pile you call a camp to be able to change a few things. Already, you've been gifted more food and bedding. Perhaps you could finally be let out of the den at certain times of the day. I'll suggest these ideas to NoName and Dime, but stick to my ruthless act." The rogue smiled slightly. "But I have to admit it's not actually that much of an act."

A low growl sounded from Dapplegrey, causing the dark red she cat's smile to widen.

Silvershy hissed. "Just get to the point."

"When the time is right, we'll take the Dark Forest down." Vixen concluded with a nonchalant twitch of her whiskers.

Silvershy frowned. "That's extremely vague." The silver she cat muttered. "Is that it?"

"For now, yes." The rogue she cat responded simply.

"Bravo! Bravo! What a wonderful plan!" The sound of paws clapping together turned everyone's attention to the other end of the den. Two pure white eyes peered at them from the darkness.

Vixen snapped to her paws. "What is that?" She demanded, advancing on the floating eyes.

"Whoa whoa whoa, hang on there." The tom voice mewed quickly, the wall of the den morphing in shape before a cat slowly came into view. It was Phantom; one of the Ghost Collective.

"You were spying on us!" Silvershy bared her teeth, trying not to let the fear set in. *He'll report us to NoName! This is it, we're going to be killed! There's no chance at freedom anymore!*

Vixen snarled in anger and unsheathed her claws. "Who are you?"

"You don't remember me?" The tortoishell tom gaped at her, feigning a broken heart. It took every ounce of self control Silvershy possessed not to burst out laughing as the Dark Forest member clutched his chest with his claws, collapsing dramatically on the ground with a wail of agony. "You've broken my heart!"

Vixen backed away from the wailing tom. "Stop it! Hey- g-get away from me!" She leapt back as the tortoiseshell started crawling towards her, his paws outstretched for the dark she cat, clutching at the air.

"I can't walk anymore!" Phantom cried. "My broken heart will not let me." His white gaze fixed on Vixen. "You must carry me." He meowed, sounding completely serious.

"No!" Vixen snapped in anger. Silvershy could see the red she cat's pelt bristling hot with embarrassment as the Ghost Collective tom continued to drag himself after her.

After some more attempts to grab Vixen, Phantom finally gave up trying and rose to his paws. "You're no fun." He whined.

"If you haven't noticed we're busy making a plan of attack. There's no time for playing games." Vixen muttered back, already positioning herself by the exit to block Phantom's way if he attempted to leave.

Phantom smiled slightly. "You can count on me to help you out."

Silvershy narrowed her green eyes suspiciously. "Why should we trust you?"

"Why should you trust her?" Phantom shot back at the silver she cat, glancing at Vixen. The rogue she cat snarled at him, but he appeared unaffected by her loud threats.

"So you won't tell NoName about our escape plan?" Wrenpaw whispered to Phantom from her sheltered spot between Shinewing and Marigoldfur.

Phantom nodded at the small Lightclan apprentice. "I promise I won't. In fact I'll help." He glanced back at Silvershy and Vixen. "I've heard Shadeheart is a.. sympathiser. Are his friends also on his side?"

Silvershy shrugged. "They've showed no signs of it."

"So it'll be my job to try and get them on our side." The tortoishell tom decided.

Vixen seemed frustrated with the way Phantom had taken over. Her pale green gaze was fixed on him, seething with rage. Her claws dug deep into the ground and her tail twitched back and forth. Silvershy offered a soft murmur of support for the Enforcer, but she rejected it with a low growl in her direction.

"Is that all?" Phantom turned to the two she cats.

"For now." Vixen muttered through her teeth.

"Wonderful." The tortoishell cat smiled before prancing out of the den.

Silvershy shuffled back to her nest once Vixen had left as well. She wondered if this was it. Were they finally going to be successful? Will Flamestar's death finally be avenged?

Starclan help us. She sighed to herself. *We need you now more than ever.*

Chapter 11

Silvershy's POV:

Silvershy lay curled up in a small, dull clearing, alone. The sky above her was grey with no signs of a sun or moon. No stars shone either. It was a surprise there was any light in the clearing at all.

The silver she cat snapped to her paws, immediately feeling the chilling mist lift from around her. It hung lazily in the air- a thick grey fog. She tried to look through it, but there was nothing. *I must be dreaming...*

Silvershy huffed in frustration and started to walk into the fog. "Hello? Anybody there?" The Lightclan warrior called softly, tail twitching. *Where am I?*

Suddenly light flashed before her eyes and she stumbled backwards, seeing the image of a cat haring through the mist at top speed, only several tail lengths away from her. "Hey!" Silvershy gasped and leapt to her paws to give chase, but the shadow disappeared from view almost immediately after.

"Run while you still can!" A she cat's voice howled through the air, shrill and panicked.

"Who's there?!" Silvershy shrieked in fright, backing away as more voices rose from the thick mist around her. "Show yourself!"

"You'll never win!"

"The shadows will reign forever!"

The mist swirled around her, the wind tugging at her pelt with fierce strength. The silver she cat stumbled and fell, crying out as the figures of many cats appeared before her. They stuck to the fog; mere shadows as they drew ever closer to the fallen warrior.

Silvershy attempted to rise but the wind threw her back down,

keeping her pinned on her side. "Please! Who are you?" The silver tabby cried over the wind, but her voice was reduced to barely a whisper, greatly overpowered by the screeches of the strange mist cats.

A pair of golden eyes flickered into view right in front of Silvershy. They were so close- she could see the amazing detail of the raging fire burning within them. The silver she cat tried to speak, but no words escaped. She was left to gape at the blazing golden eyes in stunned silence.

"When you really need us, we'll be there." Her voice whispered right into Silvershy's ears. She twisted her head to the side, breaking the stare with the eyes, but there was no one by her side. When she looked back at the eyes, they had gone entirely.

The echoing voices had died down, along with the wind. Silvershy breathed a small sigh, anxious.

Who was that and why did they say that? It couldn't have been a Starclan cat. Starclan was much brighter and full of life. *Am I dealing with cats from another region?*

As Silvershy rose shakily to her paws, she looked around once more. She was surprised to see the mist had faded, revealing a large expanse of moorland. The grass was dull and drained of life. No creature walked through it. Silvershy was seemingly alone. But as she examined the moorland further, she realised she somehow recognised this place.

"This really is Starclan." She gasped. "What happened here?"

Blossomfur's POV:

"Mumma the monster's coming!" Shadowkit wailed, pelting down the nursery tunnel at top speed. Behind her ran Flintkit, who was also wailing about the monster.

"She's coming!" Flintkit squeaked as he sprinted to Flowerstream and her kits. "Sound the alarm!"

Jaykit and Cloverkit climbed onto Flowerstream's back and started wailing in unison, mimicking an alarm.

Featherkit started shoving her collection of leaves under the nest. "Hide the treasure!" The she kit shrieked. Hollowkit joined Featherkit, hastily pushing the last few leaves under the nest just as the monster came crashing into the den...

..Spiderpaw yowled in anguish. "I'M HERE FOR THE TREASURE!" The black furred apprentice stalked menacingly along the soft den floor. "WHO'S HIDING IT?"

Shadowkit and Flintkit had escaped behind Blossomfur, far away from Spiderpaw. Cloverkit and Jaykit had stopped their alarm and were cowering in Flowerstream's fur.

Featherkit and Hollowkit had taken cover with their leaves, their little rumps sticking out from under the moss. Only Windkit and Rainkit stayed where they were, acting like loyal guards of the sacred Leaf Treasure.

"You can't pass!" Rainkit squeaked, glaring up at Spiderpaw as the she cat approached.

Spiderpaw smirked and stomped her paws on the ground. "You can't stop me! I'll get that treasure if it's the last thing I do!"

The kits all let out collective cries of fear. Rainkit darted away from his post, leaving Windkit all alone to fend off the black she cat.

"Uhh." Windkit muttered, staring up at Spiderpaw. "Mercy?"

"Only if you join me and destroy your friends!" Spiderpaw smirked down at the brown tom.

"Okay." Windkit replied immediately.

A dramatic gasp rang from the hiding kits. "TRAITOR!" Cloverkit screeched. "HOW COULD YOU?!"

"Get them!" Spiderpaw grinned, waving her paw at the shrieking kits.

Windkit let out a battle screech and lunged for his littermates, nipping and clawing at them. The five kits tumbled from their hiding places and piled on Windkit, pinning him down.

"Noooooo!" Windkit cried.

"You deserve a slow demise!" Jaykit patted his neck with her claws. "Now you must bleed to death!"

Windkit made gagging noises, clutching at his throat as if he really were dying. "I.. I can s-see the light!" He gasped, staring up at the roof of the den. "This is.. the end.." Then he went limp, his tongue sticking out for effect.

Spiderpaw wailed. "No my only friend! You'll pay for killing him!" She batted gently at the kits, grinning like a maniac.

"Don't let her get the treasure!" Featherkit yowled.

"Let's all get her at once!" Hollowkit charged for the apprentice, attacking her forelegs. The other kits followed his lead and they soon had her pinned.

"We got her!" The kits cheered in joy. "We killed the monster!"

All of a sudden Spiderpaw let out a loud cry of pain. The whole nursery jumped in surprise.

"Whoa Spiderpaw you don't have to make it sound so real!" Hollowkit squeaked, his eyes wide in fear.

Spiderpaw's only reply was another shriek. Blossomfur gasped as the kits backed away from the apprentice to reveal her writhing on the ground, her face screwed up in agony. The skin on her back moved, stretching. It was as if there was a creature under her skin, trying to escape.

"Is that.." Blossomfur muttered.

"Her wings!" Flowerstream snapped to her paws. "It must be her wings!" She rushed to the she cat's side and began running her paws over her back, comforting her. "Someone get the Enforcers!"

Blossomfur shot out of her nest and pounded out of the nursery. She nearly crashed into Shadeheart, falling against the tunnel wall instead. "Her wings!" She gasped up at her mate. "Spiderpaw's wings are coming!"

Shadeheart's eyes widened in shock and he spun around, racing for the warriors den. He disappeared inside, reappearing with Tyler behind him. All the commotion had brought NoName out of her den, and she red she cat followed them into the nursery.

Blossomfur returned to her nest with Shadeheart to watch the ordeal.

Tyler crouched beside Spiderpaw. "Hey, Spiderpaw. It's okay, you're safe."

Spiderpaw cried, her claws sinking into the ground. "Make it stop!" She pleaded.

"I can't. You're going to have to fight through this." The black and blue tom murmured back. "But it'll be worth it. You'll have two beautiful wings in the end."

Blossomfur looked at NoName. She was watching from the shadows. Her pure white eyes looked troubled. *Why?*

"Aah!" Spiderpaw screamed as the lumps on her back grew. Blossomfur looked away, feeling sick. *Is this what every winged cat goes through?* She looked at Shadeheart. *I'm glad he takes after his father.*

After an unbearable amount of time, and countless wails later, there was a sudden spray of blood and two pitch black wings sprouted from Spiderpaw's back. They hung in the air for a bit, completely still. Blood dripped from the feathers, falling around the apprentice.

"Congratulations." Tyler meowed, licking Spiderpaw reassuringly. The black she cat simply let out a small whimper, her body trembling from the ordeal. "That was a fast transformation." He observed. "And you did it brilliantly."

Once again glancing at NoName, Blossomfur saw the red she cat

glaring at Spiderpaw's wings. The envy was clear in her white eyes, but she appeared to hide it well enough for nobody else to notice.

Tyler stood up and looked at his sister. His blue eyes studied her, asking a silent question.

"I should've had those." Was all NoName replied with before storming out of the den, her thick red tail lashing behind her.

Chapter 12

Shadeheart's POV:

"Come along Spiderpaw!" Tyler called to his apprentice as he padded to the camp exit. "I'm time for your training!"

Spiderpaw bounded out of her den, her black wings flailing awkwardly at her sides. "Will I be learning to fly?" She asked eagerly as she reached her mentor's side.

"You won't be flying yet." The black and blue tom responded. "For now we'll work on strengthening those wings. You can barely control them!"

Shadeheart smiled slightly as he watched the two cats leave camp. He half wished he could have wings of his own. But, with Spiderpaw's ordeal from the day before still fresh in his mind, he wasn't so sure.

"Hey." A she cat's voice hissed in his ear. "Are you with the prisoners?"

Shadeheart slowly turned his head to see Vixen staring at him, her pale green eyes not breaking away from his face. "Uh.." He stared back at the new Enforcer. Why was she asking? His immediate answer would've been no; if NoName discovered he was still blatantly supporting the prisoners... But was she asking because she was on their side too? "Why are you asking?" He eventually asked back.

"Just spit it out." The she cat hissed, obviously growing annoyed by his stalling. "Are you with them or not?"

Shadeheart's ears flattened and he muttered back. "I'm with them."

The intensity of her stare softened, but she stayed uncomfortably close to him, whispering in his ear. "Good. Phantom and I will help

you."

"Shadeheart!" Blossomfur yowled from the nursery, bounding out of the tunnel. Shadeheart tensed as she saw him and Vixen. The cream she cat's eyes burned a hole at the two of them. "What are you doing?" She asked sweetly, approaching the two.

"Just giving him a warning." Vixen replied gruffly, stepping away from the dark tom. "Don't forget what I said, Shadeheart." Then the Enforcer turned around and stalked into the den.

Shadeheart sighed and nodded his head, pretending that he had just been scolded. Blossomfur immediately pressed herself against him. "What did she say?" She asked, nuzzling his cheek.

"Just, uh, telling me to... To work harder on patrols." Shadeheart stammered, looking at his mate. He hoped she bought the lie.

Blossomfur glanced away from him and at Vixen, who was grooming her fur outside the warriors den. "Stop being so friendly with every she cat in this camp." The cream furred she cat looked back at him. "You're my mate. I don't want to lose you."

Shadeheart nodded and licked her muzzle. "Don't worry, Blossomfur, I love you. I won't leave you, ever. I promise."

"Good." Blossomfur purred and started leading him to the nursery. "Now it's your turn to watch the kits for a bit. I'm going hunting."

Shadeheart sighed. "But the other queens can look after the kits. I want to come with you."

"I don't trust the other queens." Blossomfur meowed, her voice suddenly turning ferocious. "Those Clan cat scums will kill my kits as soon I leave, I bet."

"They would never." Shadeheart mewed back.

"Of course they would."

"Have you forgotten who raised us?" Shadeheart muttered, staring at Blossomfur. "Flowerstream wouldn't hurt your kits, they're like

her own family. She'll keep them safe."

Blossomfur growled. "I don't care. You're going to keep them safe. I trust you and no one else."

Shadeheart hissed in frustration but nodded his head. "Fine, I'll stay back and watch them."

"Good. Now go." Blossomfur mewed as she broke away from his side, trotting to the camp exit with a happy flick of her tail.

Blossomfur's POV:

The cream furred she cat darted after the mouse, her claws outstretched, but she couldn't catch it. "Ugh!" She hissed in frustration as she slowed to a stop. "I'm so unfit!"

The mouse scurried away and out of sight, leaving Blossomfur panting and alone. "I need to hunt more." She mewed to herself. "Caring for these kits has weakened me."

The light furred she cat let out a sigh and took off for the beach. Maybe she'd find some easy prey there.

She decided to run, leaping over undergrowth and fallen twigs. She grew tired quickly but pushed on, making sure she kept running until she left the forest and her paws hit the uneven sand. Blossomfur skidded to a halt with a small mewl of excitement. Adrenaline pumped through her veins from the short run and she grinned widely.

"Enjoyed the run?" A familiar voice murmured in her ear, barely a whisper in the breeze.

Blossomfur tensed but replied smoothly. "I did, Spectrum. What brings you here?"

"Just to remind you to hurry up. If NoName is successful in giving Shadeheart the shadows, you'll lose him forever." The black furred she cat stepped before her, smiling with sick joy. "Or do you not

care for him after all?"

"Of course I care! Shadeheart is my mate! I love him!" The cream furred she cat snarled loudly, taking a defensive stance before the Promethean.

Spectrum chuckled. "Feisty."

"With good reason." Blossomfur hissed back, lashing her tail. "I can't stand it when he flirts with the other she cats."

"Flirting, you say?"

"Yes." Blossomfur growled. "How can I keep Shadeheart to myself?"

Spectrum shrugged. "Can't help you there. You gotta find that out yourself."

Blossomfur flattened her ears. "Wow, thanks for your help." She muttered sarcastically.

"Always glad to assist." Spectrum purred back.

"Just leave me alone."

Spectrum rolled her eyes and replied, mocking her tone of voice. "Just reminding you that you're running out of time."

"I'll do it. Just wait."

"How long?" Spectrum meowed. "Because NoName could die at any second now." Then she blinked away.

Chapter 13

Special POV Chapter

Vixen's POV:

"So Vixen." Zephyr began as he trailed a claw over his meal. "You were a leader. A leader of rogues."

Vixen nodded her dark orange head, swiping her tongue over her jaws to pick up the last bits of her vole. "Indeed I was."

"What was it like?" The grey Promethean asked, his tone emotionless. He showed no signs of curiosity in his question.

"Hm." Vixen murmured, delving into her mind for the right word to describe her 'past life.' It took her a few heartbeats to murmur. "Fun." The dark ginger she cat let a lazy grin slide onto her lips.

Zephyr mirrored the grin. "Did you have a lot of followers?"

"Many." The Enforcer responded. "Too many to count, in fact." She glanced at Rook and Sparrow. They avoided her gaze. They had betrayed her to join NoName. Abandoning the Circle meant death. Nobody left with their organs intact.

"What will they do now that you're gone?" Flare asked from where she lay beside Zephyr. Vixen noticed the winged she cat leaning close to the grey tom. Were they mates? *What a strange couple.*

Shaking her head softly, Vixen replied. "They'll most likely assume I'm dead and appoint a new leader." She shrugged as if it had been planned all along- and it had been. Vixen had made sure her Second knew that if three sunrises passed without her reappearing, she was to be presumed dead and he would take charge.

"Do you regret joining us?" Zephyr asked, stretching his jaws in a wide, lazy yawn.

Vixen snorted. "No. It was about time for a change in scenery. And this place seems interesting." Flare and Zephyr nodded in understanding.

"As long as you stay loyal to us, I don't care what you think of this place." Dime spoke softly between bites of his squirrel. The dark furred tom fixed Vixen with a long stare as he chewed on his meal.

Vixen stared back, showing no emotion in her pale green eyes. She smiled slightly when the Dark Forest leader backed down and looked away from her. *The sooner I can liberate these stupid Clan prisoners, the sooner I can leave.* She didn't want to be around these cats. They barely had an ounce of loyalty compared to her Circle.

But I must keep up this act for a bit longer. Until the time to strike arrives.

Unknown POV:

The two loners made their way along the strange-smelling borderline, their faces twisted into looks of confusion.

"Should we enter?" His companion asked, looking up at the grey tabby with round blue eyes.

Boulder shrugged. "They might be territorial."

"The scent is weak." The she cat reported, giving the surrounding bushes a few test sniffs. "They don't care about their borders." She started to move further into the forest.

"Careful, Wish." Boulder muttered. "You don't know what's in there."

"Food." Wish responded without looking back at him. "There's food in the forest."

As if to remind him of his hunger, his stomach rumbled loudly. Boulder sighed to himself, watching as Wish padded away. Her bones were poking through her fur- proof of their need for nutrition. Surely the occupants of this territory would understand

they needed food urgently...

"Mouse!" Wish suddenly yowled, taking off through the undergrowth.

"Wait!" Boulder hissed, darting after the lithe she cat. "Keep your voice down!"

"Says the one who's yelling!" She called back to him, her tail disappearing in the distance.

Boulder heaved an angry sigh. She was going to get hurt!

Something landed behind him and he spun around to see a dark furred tom with brilliant red, scaly wings stretched out on either side of him. "Hello." The large tom smirked at the grey loner.

"Ah!" Boulder hissed. "Who are you?" He backed away from the red and black tom, claws unsheathing in a heartbeat.

"Just a friendly resident of this forest."

"Friendly, huh?" Boulder murmured, sinking into a defensive stance. "Are there more of you?"

The bigger tom glanced up into the trees. "Maybe." He shrugged and looked back at Boulder. "But who knows."

There was a sudden screech of pain behind them and Boulder gasped. "Wish!" He leapt to find her but a second winged tom landed in his way. This one was black and blue, with two blue horns glimmering on his head. "Get out of my way! She could be hurt!" The loner attempted to shove past the winged tom, but he was thrown backwards by one of the powerful blue wings.

Boulder landed on his back and the black and red tom slunk over to him. "You hear that? That silence?" He placed his paws on Boulder. "You're friend is dead."

Boulder gritted his teeth. "You monsters!"

The red and black tom giggled, peering closer to Boulder. "What a

shame.. What a shame." He started laughing like a maniac, stepping back to let the other winged cat pick Boulder up. "Take him to camp. NoName'll like this one!"

Dime's POV:

"She's escaped!" NoName's wail came from her den. "Velvet escaped!"

Dime was jolted from his snooze in the circle of chatting Enforcers. He growled in annoyance as the red she cat tumbled down the small hill and threw herself into the centre of the gathered Enforcers. "She's gone!" She cried into the ground.

"Pull yourself together!" Dime hissed, rolling to her side. "You're supposed to be the leader of this place! If anyone else sees you like this we'll be overthrown!"

NoName sobbed. "Find my baby..."

"Strike, Tyler, take her to her den. I'll go find Velvet.." Dime sighed heavily and rose to his paws, letting the two winged toms drag their sister back into the shelter of her den.

Her 'tough act' has slipped too many times. The prisoners will soon find out. Dime strolled around the edges of camp, sniffing for the runaway bunny. *If NoName's behaviour prevails, the Dark Forest will be defeated.*

It was her dream to be leader. She's told me enough of her past for me to understand how important this is for her. Without it she's nothing. The dark furred tom glanced at NoName's den for a moment. "I'll make sure we stay the rightful rulers of these cats. I promise." He meowed softly.

"Need help?" Zephyr's voice startled the Dark Forest leader and he snapped his green gaze to peer at the grey Promethean.

"What could you do to help?" Dime asked, giving his chest a few flustered licks.

Zephyr shrugged. "I could track it down and bring it back much faster than you."

Dime bared his teeth at the Enforcer. "Remember who you're speaking to."

"You don't scare me." Zephyr smiled at Dime, his tail swaying behind him.

Flare approached the grey Promethean and touched his back with her tail. Dime noticed the glow in Zephyr's eyes grow in intensity from Flare's touch. "Don't mind Zephyr. He'll be going now, won't you?" The orange she cat smiled at the grey tom.

Zephyr's eyes rolled and he pulled away from Flare but not before giving her cheek a swift nuzzle. Dime watched, eyes narrowed.

Flare turned to Dime once Zephyr had blinked away. "Hey."

"You and Zephyr seem close." Dime observed, looking at NoName's sister closely. "Are you mates?"

Flare gave an uncomfortable lash of her tail. "Uh." She muttered. "I don't know.."

To ease the suddenly tense air, Dime chuckled. "I look forward to seeing the half-Promethean, half-winged-tribe kits running around."

The orange she cat's yellow eyes seemed to pop out of her head. "You know?!"

Dime blinked in surprise. "Wait, you're actually having his kits?"

Flare nodded, her feathered wings rising to their defensive position around her body as she awaited his response.

"Great." He meowed, seeing her instantly relax. "This is great. I'm happy you've found someone at last."

"I'm happy I've found him as well." She murmured back, smiling softly. "It's only taken about two lifetimes."

Dime laughed. "Love is worth waiting for, isn't it." He meowed as he glanced at NoName's den, smiling. "No matter how strange it is."

Chapter 14

Shadeheart's POV:

"Catch mee!" Flintkit wriggled his haunches and prepared to jump from Blossomfur's head onto Shadeheart's back as he strolled past.

"Wait, you'll get hurt!" Blossomfur hissed, lowering her head so that Flintkit couldn't jump. But he already leapt away from her, slamming into Shadeheart's side.

Shadeheart gasped in surprise, darting to catch his kit. "Flintkit!" He hissed as he caught the little tom in his paws. "Don't do that!"

"You caught me!" Flintkit cheered, rolling onto the floor of the nursery cave. "Did you see that?" He asked his littermates. "Father caught me!"

Shadeheart shook his head with a sigh. "Don't do it again." He meowed. "Because next time I might not catch you."

"No fair!" Shadowkit whined. "Now I can try it!"

Cinderkit pawed at her sister. "Stop yelling!"

"You stop yelling!" Shadowkit squeaked back.

"Shut up both of you!" Flintkit joined in, pouncing on his littermates.

A war broke out in the nursery. Soon all the kits joined in; even Flamekit and Snowkit.

They were so distracted with their battle they didn't even notice Bluesnow was starting to kit.

Blossomfur's POV:

Blossomfur was startled by the sound of Bluesnow crying out in pain. She snapped her gaze to the blue she cat to see her writhing in her nest. Were her kits coming?

"Her kits!" Flowerstream darted to her paws, her eyes wide. "Get the medicine cats!" She looked at Shadeheart. "Go!"

As Shadeheart scrambled out of the den, Blossomfur brought her kits closer to her belly.

"What's going on?" Flintkit squeaked, his eyes wide.

"Bluesnow's kits are coming." Blossomfur murmured, looking at the blue she cat. *Those kits are half Shadeheart's.* Blossomfur bared her teeth. *If he cares for those Lightclan scums more than my kits... I'll kill them. And Bluesnow can die too!*

"Aaah." Bluesnow hissed. "Why now?"

"Better late then never." Redleaf murmured, resting her tail over the blue queen's back.

Shadeheart stormed back into the den, collapsing beside Bluesnow. "Are you okay?" He asked, worried.

Blossomfur held back a growl as Bluesnow answered. "Fine, just fine."

Leave her alone! You're supposed to be my mate! You should care for me and our kits! The cream furred she cat didn't realise she was tearing at her nest until Shadowkit squeaked for her to stop.

Flowerstream sent a glare at Blossomfur, clearly warning her to calm down. *You're not my mother!* Blossomfur flattened her ears at the older queen. *You may have raised me, but you hold no power over me!*

Shinewing, Marigoldfur and Wrenpaw hurried in with their bundles of herbs. *If only NoName had cut the herb rations for this moon! Then Bluesnow wouldn't get help from them!*

As the three medicine cats began to work on Bluesnow, Blossomfur

tried to ignore them. She focused on her own kits.

Cinderkit was watching the medicine cats from her perch at the lip of the nest. Her vibrant green eyes were round with awe as she watched the three prisoners feed the queen some mashed herbs.

"Aren't you scared, Cinderkit?" Shadowkit squeaked, hiding behind her sister.

"Never! This is amazing!" Cinderkit whispered, not breaking her gaze away from the scene.

Blossomfur frowned. "What's so amazing about it?"

"The medicine cats... They know exactly what to do to help everyone in need!" Cinderkit mewled. "Can I get a closer look? Please!" She glanced up at her mother.

Blossomfur grumbled. "Fine. But be careful. Don't get in their way."

Cinderkit grinned and rolled out of the nest, bounding up to Shinewing, Marigoldfur and Wrenpaw. "Hai!"

Shinewing glanced down at Cinderkit. "Oh hello there." She smiled.

"Can I help?" Cinderkit asked.

Wrenpaw gasped. "No! You're a kit!"

Marigoldfur cut in. "Be quiet Wrenpaw. Cinderkit can help out if she wants to." The she cat smiled down at the little kit. "Here, take this wet moss and give it to Bluesnow to drink from."

Blossomfur watched closely as her kit happily padded up to Bluesnow's head and passed the moss to her. Bluesnow uttered a small mumble of thanks before letting out an almighty yowl of pain. Cinderkit took a single step back, but appeared unaffected by the loud noise.

"The first kit is coming!" Marigoldfur meowed. "Wrenpaw, get ready. You know what to do, right?"

Wrenpaw nodded, the young she cat's eyes bright with determination. "Lick the kit until it cries and then place it at Bluesnow's belly."

"Well done." Shinewing praised her apprentice. "You're doing well."

Marigoldfur paused to murmur to Shinewing. "You're doing a great job in training Wrenpaw. Nutwhisker would be proud."

Shinewing smiled softly, but her eyes shone with grief. "Thank you."

Blossomfur blinked. She had forgotten who Nutwhisker was. It seemed everyone else in the den except for Bluesnow and Flowerstream were confused as well, but they stayed silent as Bluesnow's kitting drew on.

I'm at that stage where I'm not bothered to write anymore because this is going on for too long and it's becoming tiring. And this is only book three. I've got a lot more to do if I want to finish this series successfully. Seems like others have given up on this too; the number of reads are steadily declining with each chapter. :,)

Anyway. I apologise for the slow updates.

Chapter 15

Shadeheart's POV:

Shadeheart tried to ignore the burning of Blossomfur's eyes on his back, trying to focus on helping Bluesnow. "You can do it." He meowed reassuringly.

Her deep blue eyes fluttered open and closed, not meeting his gaze. "I-I don't know... If I can.."

"The first kit is coming. Wrenpaw!" Shinewing lifted her paws from Bluesnow's belly and looked at her apprentice. "Be ready."

Wrenpaw concentrated on the soft moss pile she'd created for the kits to fall into. The young she cat's paws kneaded the ground as she waited impatiently.

"This is taking too long." Marigoldfur muttered. "The first kit should have arrived by now."

Shadeheart felt his heart skip a beat and he stared up at the medicine cats. "What do you mean? What's going on?"

"Nothing, it should be fine." Shinewing smiled reassuringly at Shadeheart. "Just keep her company. Make sure she is hydrated."

Wrenpaw peered at Bluesnow. "I think I can see the kit."

Shinewing joined Wrenpaw. "It's stuck." She hissed, looking at Marigoldfur. "What do we do?" She asked the senior medicine cat.

"Push harder Bluesnow." Marigoldfur ordered. "Shinewing, see if you can help pull it out." The Smallclan medicine cat began kneading Bluesnow's belly again.

Bluesnow wailed, her claws sinking into the ground. "Get it out of me!"

"We're trying!" Wrenpaw gasped.

"Try harder!" Bluesnow growled back.

Shadeheart rested his paw on Bluesnow's shoulder. "You have to help them."

"Don't tell me what to do!" She snapped, glaring at him.

Shadeheart jumped in surprise, but tried not to let her mood bother him. The kitting was hard for her, of course she was going to have a short temper.

"Got it! We got the first kit!" Shinewing gushed, pawing a wet, unmoving bundle to Wrenpaw. The apprentice immediately started licking it, but pulled away with a small murmur of confusion.

"It's cold."

Shadeheart's heart was in his throat as he glanced across Bluesnow's body at the medicine cats. Shinewing's ears were flattened in disbelief as she leaned down to listen for a heartbeat. The grief in her eyes that appeared a moment later was plenty for Shadeheart to know that the kit wasn't alive.

"A stillborn she cat." Marigoldfur mumbled. "But understandable; it took too long to be birthed."

Bluesnow started weeping. "Nooo.. Starclan.. bring my kit back. Don't take her.."

Shadeheart rested his head against her's, hoping to comfort the blue she cat. His own heart ached from the loss of the kit. *His* kit. She hadn't even had a chance to live. *Take care of her when she makes it to you, Starclan.* He closed his eyes with a small mumble of sorrow.

Suddenly Bluesnow pushed him away, a choked yowl escaping her lips. Shadeheart stumbled back, nearly falling on Redleaf. He quickly apologised to the other queen, but she still hissed threateningly at him.

"The next kits are coming." Marigoldfur reported, lifting her paws

from their spot on Bluesnow's belly. "Move the deceased kit aside and get ready for these ones. We have at least two more on the way."

"Hopefully these ones are alive and healthy." Shinewing meowed softly, her amber eyes dull with sadness. Even Wrenpaw's bright spirits had been crushed by the sudden death of the tiny newborn.

"Please let them live." Shadeheart prayed softly to the cave ceiling. He glanced back at Blossomfur to see she had lost interest in the kitting. She was busy playing with Shadowkit and Flintkit. *At least those two are distracted from the horrors. They won't have to experience any of it for another few moons.*

"I can see the second kit already!" Wrenpaw squeaked.

"Help it out." Shinewing meowed, picking up a small stick and passing it to Bluesnow. "Here." She murmured, letting the queen take the stick in her jaws.

Shadeheart flinched as Bluesnow cried loudly, tearing at the ground as the second kit fell onto the soft moss. He looked at the kit, his body tense.

Wrenpaw began licking the kit and a wave of relief passed through the den as the little bundle started mewling loudly in response. The young medicine cat picked up the kit and placed him at Bluesnow's belly. Shadeheart purred as the little tom kit started suckling immediately.

Bluesnow had no time to rest. The third kit made its way onto the moss within heartbeats. Another tom. Wrenpaw groomed the kit before placing him beside his littermate.

Bluesnow groaned. "Is it over?"

Marigoldfur shook her head, her paws kneading Bluesnow's belly. "No. There are two more."

"Two more?" Shadeheart gasped.

"This is a big litter." Shinewing muttered, her voice lowering to a

whisper as she spoke the Marigoldfur. "Do you think she can make it?"

Shadeheart snapped. "Of course she'll make it! Right, Bluesnow?" The blue she cat simply let out a weak mumble in response. His throat tightened and he let out a choked whimper. "No. You're strong. You can survive this!"

"If she can get the last kits out as quickly as possible, she'll have a chance." Marigoldfur sighed.

Bluesnow let out a faint cry, her stomach rippling again as the next kit arrived. Once it slipped onto the cushioning moss, Wrenpaw licked it and then place it with its siblings.

"One more. This is the last one." Shinewing promised, giving Bluesnow's ear a comforting lick. "You've got this."

Bluesnow gritted her teeth and nodded, her deep blue eyes shining with tears. Shadeheart wrapped a paw around her, holding her close as the final kit made a slow escape onto Wrenpaw's ready tongue.

"She did it." Marigoldfur murmured as Wrenpaw set down the fourth living bundle by Bluesnow's belly. "Thank you Starclan."

Shadeheart was grinning like crazy; he probably looked insane but he didn't care. Bluesnow was alive and four of the five kits had survived. He couldn't wait until he could name them.

Bluesnow was exhausted, barely awake enough to admire her own kits. "They're beautiful." She croaked softly.

"They are." Shadeheart agreed, nuzzling her.

The blue she cat slowly lowered her head onto the moss, sighing. Within heartbeats, she fell into a deep sleep. Shadeheart purred and looked back at the kits.

Three toms and a little she kit. Two had Shadeheart's dark pelt, one had Bluesnow's fur and the she kit had a thick orange-brown coat.

Shadeheart knew he could never compare these kits with Blossomfur's- they were all his own kits! However, he felt strangely closer to Bluesnow's litter than he did Blossomfur's. It was a terrible feeling that made him feel sick. He should love all his kits equally. *And I do! They all hold an equal place in my heart.* The young, dark furred warrior rose to his paws. *And they will all grow to be strong, capable warriors.*

Chapter 16

Blossomfur's POV:

Flowerstream and her kits had moved across for the morning to greet Bluesnow's new litter. Blossomfur tried to stay asleep by stuffing moss into her ears but even that couldn't keep out the excited squeals from the kits as they played with the newborns. Shadowkit and Flintkit had asked to join Flowerstream's kits and Blossomfur had waved them away, too focused in trying to rest. Fortunately, Cinderkit remained by her side, obediently napping at her belly.

Shadeheart was also in the den, but he had chosen to sleep in Bluesnow's nest that night. Blossomfur had never felt so betrayed before. It had been a cold night without his warmth beside her.

It was when Flamekit and Snowkit awoke that Blossomfur gave up completely. She lifted her head and took out the moss in her ears, grumbling. The cream furred she cat glanced across the den at Bluesnow. The blue she cat was smiling widely as the other nursery residents purred and cooed at her kits. Shadeheart had his tail entwined with her's, smiling as well.

As Shadeheart leaned down to nuzzle Bluesnow lovingly, Blossomfur felt a white-hot slash of jealousy course through her. *Get away from her! You're supposed to be my mate!*

The patter of pawsteps interrupted the happy gathering of queens and kits and everyone looked to the cave entrance to see Strike stroll in. "I'm here for the dead one." He meowed, peering at the she cats. "Where is it?"

Silently, Bluesnow looked at the moss-wrapped body of the stillborn kit. It had been placed in the corner of the den, since nobody was sure what to do with it. Flowerstream had donated some of the feathers from her nest to cover the little mossy body.

Strike strode over to the kit and unwrapped the moss, flicking aside the feathers without a care in the world. Bluesnow growled fiercely but he ignored her. "Has it got a name?" He looked at Shadeheart.

"No." The young tom replied.

"Stillbornkit will do." Strike chuckled and picked up the dead kit. "What do you think?" He smiled at Bluesnow.

The blue queen snarled at the winged Enforcer.

"You're lucky Shadeheart loves you so much, otherwise you and your kits would have been killed." Strike spoke through the small bundle before trotting out of the den.

Blossomfur bared her teeth in anger. *If only Shadeheart had let NoName kill Bluesnow. Then he'd still care for me.*

Soon, the nursery returned to normal. The chatter grew louder and louder as the seconds passed until it began to become unbearable. Blossomfur scowled, sulking in her nest as the others exchanged happy meows and squeaks.

"What are their names?" She heard Redleaf ask Bluesnow.

"The two black toms are called Owlkit and Mountainkit. The blue tom is Pondkit and the brown she kit is Robinkit." Bluesnow purred.

"Aren't they just the cutest little things?" Flowerstream smiled.

"Oh yes." Redleaf agreed, purring. "And they'll be wonderful warriors I bet."

"They'll fight on the Clan's side!" Flamekit cheered, bounding around the nests with a battle screech.

"Hush." Redleaf ordered, briskly bringing Flamekit back to her side, much to the young kit's distress.

Shadeheart chuckled. "Soon the Clans will be free, then everything can go back to normal."

"Oh I can't wait to show you what real Clan life is like." Flowerstream sighed. "You'll love it."

"I hope so." The black tom murmured.

Blossomfur growled to herself as they talked. The Dark Forest was fine! Life was good. Of course the prisoners wouldn't think that, but they just had to accept it. If the Clans defeated NoName, Blossomfur didn't know if she would be welcomed into their ranks or cast aside with the Dark Forest. The thought made her shiver in fear.

"Shadeheart!" NoName's voice boomed through the tunnel, loud and strong. "Come with me. You have shadow training."

With a small sigh, Shadeheart reluctantly left Bluesnow and walked out of the cave. *Finally.* Blossomfur thought. *It's about time he left Bluesnow alone. She doesn't deserve his love. I do!*

Shadeheart's POV:

After a long and tiring lesson about the shadows with NoName, Shadeheart stumbled into the nursery with a low sigh. It was way past sunhigh and most of the queens and kits were napping, except for Blossomfur. The cream she cat lay alert as he padded in, and motioned for him to join her almost immediately.

Too tired to say anything, Shadeheart staggered into the nest with Blossomfur. He had meant to greet Bluesnow and their kits first but the tiredness tugged at his limbs, urging him to rest as soon as possible.

"How was it?" Blossomfur asked, grooming his head as he got comfortable in their nest.

"Tiring." Shadeheart replied, yawning as he rested his muzzle against her chest.

Blossomfur nuzzled him. "I love you."

"Love you too.." Shadeheart smiled, his golden eyes drooping

closed.

Chapter 17

Shadeheart's POV:

Two days after Bluesnow's kitting, Shadeheart found himself sitting in the circle of Enforcers with Blazeheart and Darksky on either side of him.

It had been a while since he'd hung out with Darksky and Blazeheart. Unfortunately Nightwhisper, Stormcloud and Bluestorm were out on patrols and were unable to join the catch-up session.

"How's Blossomfur?" Darksky asked, glancing at Shadeheart.

"She's fine." He responded.

"Only fine?" Blazeheart chuckled.

"She hasn't exactly changed. You guys know her." Shadeheart sighed, resting his head on his paws.

"So, she's still a manipulative fox-heart who has trust issues?" Darksky mewed, a grin rising on her lips.

"No!" Shadeheart lashed his tail and glared at her. "She is perfect."

"Don't be so prickly." Darksky muttered, taken aback by his snappy mood.

"He can't help himself." Blazeheart murmured to Darksky, knowing that Shadeheart could hear him. "He's under Blossomfur's poisonous spell."

"I am not!" Shadeheart snapped, rising to his paws to glare at the two warriors. "She is my mate, of course I'm going to be defensive if you insult her!" Without waiting for their replies, Shadeheart stormed away to the other end of the clearing where NoName and Flare were eating with Zephyr and Dime. He was so upset he didn't feel an ounce of regret for interrupting the Dark Forest leaders.

NoName sent him a glare as he sat down with a huff in between herself and Flare. "What's up with you?" Dime muttered, glancing at his son.

"Nothing." Shadeheart sighed, taking a deep breath of the cool afternoon air.

NoName meowed. "If there's something on your mind, tell us. Now."

"It's just Darksky and Blazeheart." Shadeheart murmured.

The red she cat was on her paws, glaring at the two warriors. "What did they do?"

"Nothing." Shadeheart said quickly, waiting for his mother to sit back down again. "They were just teasing me about Blossomfur."

"Teasing you about her?" Dime muttered.

"They think she's manipulating me or something." The young dark tom shrugged.

NoName snorted. "No son of mine will be manipulated by his mate. What's she doing to you?"

"Nothing." Shadeheart muttered again. "It was just a joke.. I love Blossomfur and she loves me; she'd never try to control me or do anything like that."

NoName's tail tip twitched, but she let the conversation drop. The red she cat turned back to Flare and Zephyr. "So when are your kits due?" She asked, glancing at her belly.

"When are yours?" Flare shot back, smiling as her sister's fur bristled.

"I asked first!" NoName meowed.

"What's so bad about kits all of a sudden? You have Shadeheart... This litter can't be any different." Zephyr meowed.

"I- I know, but.." NoName grumbled. "But yeah."

"Yeah?" Flare asked.

NoName nodded. "Yeah."

"Yeah." Dime murmured as well.

Shadeheart groaned. "Just... When are they due?"

"In one moon." Both she cats responded immediately.

"Finally." He sighed, shaking his head.

Shadeheart had to admit he was excited to see his new siblings. He would finally be the bigger brother who would help raise his younger brothers and sisters.

He was also looking forward to Flare's kits. *Will they have Promethean powers like Zephyr?*

"Maybe you should move into the nursery now." NoName meowed to Flare. "Settle in."

"And when will you join me?" The orange she cat muttered, her yellow eyes glimmering with a sudden sadness.

"When I want to."

"So you get a choice but I don't?" Flare muttered to her sister.

"I wasn't saying that.." NoName murmured.

"Oh sure." Flare growled, rising to her paws. "Ugh, whatever. I'll go live in the nursery then, since I'm so useless without my wings!"

Blossomfur's POV:

Blossomfur looked up as Flare stomped into the cave. Squeaks of fear from the kits woke Redleaf from her nap and the red she cat immediately snapped to her paws with a low hiss.

"Whoa." Flintkit gasped, climbing onto Blossomfur's back for a

better view of Flare. "I love your wings!"

"Can I touch them?" Shadowkit asked eagerly, bounding out of the nest to where Flare had stopped in the centre of the cave.

"Uh.." Flare shrugged and lay down on the soft mossy floor, allowing the young she kit to feel her wings.

"So soft!" Shadowkit gasped, hugging the orange feathers.

Blossomfur sighed as Cinderkit and Flintkit gave her questioning looks. "Fine, you can go feel them as well." The two kits grinned and trotted up to where Shadowkit was embracing the orange feathers.

Soon the other kits joined in and Flare's wings were pinned to the ground by the young furballs. Even Bluesnow's litter stumbled up to Flare, drawn to her by the noise the others were making.

Flare meowed. "Okay, okay, that's enough." Her tail lashed uncomfortably as Flamekit and Snowkit climbed onto her back to attack the bases of her wings. "Hey! Get off!" Flare hissed, snapping to her paws. The kits were thrown off, all of them falling onto the cushioned ground.

Immediately, Flowerstream, Bluesnow and Redleaf were up and grabbing their kits with growls and snarls at Flare. Blossomfur stayed in her nest, trusting the Enforcer- unlike the other queens.

Flare would never intentionally hurt my kits.

After the kits had been placed back in their respective nests, Flare shuffled into the corner of the cave, gathering some moss around her to create a nest.

"You're expecting?" Flowerstream asked, staring at the Enforcer with narrowed eyes.

"I am, yes." Flare settled into the nest with a huff. "Have you got a problem?"

"No." The grey she cat replied, turning away to groom her own kits.

Blossomfur smiled and closed her eyes for a nap, already feeling safer with the Enforcer's presence in the den.

Chapter 18

Shadeheart's POV:

"Adventure!" Shadowkit mewled, darting out of the nursery cave and into the main clearing. The wave of kits followed her, with the queens trailing behind them. Shadeheart laughed as they all began exploring camp, moving together as a large mass of soft fur.

"I'm so happy NoName allowed them to have one day to explore camp." Flowerstream sighed, sitting down beside Shadeheart. "They all really needed this."

"I'm amazed that your mother has that amount of kindness in her stone-cold heart." Redleaf muttered as she passed them.

Shadeheart sighed. NoName was a normal cat just like everyone else in camp. She was just a bit.. troubled.

The kits' squeals of fear made Shadeheart tense. He snapped to his paws and looked across the clearing to see Rabbitstar growling fiercely at them, stomping after the little furballs. "You'll all pay for disturbing my nap!" The Magiclan leader snarled at the kits.

Flowerstream immediately shoved past Shadeheart, storming up to Rabbitstar to protect her kits. "Back off!" She hissed, ears flattened to the back of her head. The kits huddled behind her, squealing as Rabbitstar glared at them.

The brown tabby bared his teeth at the grey she cat. "LightClan scum." He spat at her with a lash of his tail.

Shadeheart growled and stepped forwards, shielding his foster mother from the Magiclan leader. "You hold no authority here." He snarled at the old tom.

"I've been given full reign over the Clan prisoners." Rabbitstar hissed back, unsheathing his claws. "And that flea-bag of a queen is one of

them! So I suggest you leave before I get your mother involved."

Shadeheart lashed his tail and stood his ground. "You terrorised the kits."

"They disturbed my nap." The stocky brown tom responded, his claws scoring across the ground. "But I wasn't going to hurt them."

"You tried to bite me!" Flamekit squeaked, hugging Flowerstream's hind leg.

"It was a warning bite. I didn't even catch you." Rabbitstar reasoned, his emerald green eyes blazing with anger.

"Leave the kits alone." Flowerstream ordered, her fur bristling.

Rabbitstar grinned. "No."

"I will make you regret that!" The grey furred queen tried to push past Shadeheart to get to the brown tom but he held her back.

"If you fight him you'll be killed!" Shadeheart gasped, stumbling as she shoved her weight against him. "Then who will care for your kits?"

The other queens were on their way over. Rabbitstar stood calmly and watched as they led the kits away from them and gathered them safely beside the nursery cave entrance. Eventually, Flowerstream gave up trying to attack Rabbitstar and stood back.

"Magiclan deserves to be wiped out." She spat.

Rabbitstar laughed. "That's where you're wrong. NoName and her Dark Forest followers need to be destroyed. Not us."

Shadeheart bared his teeth. "You'll never succeed." If Rabbitstar somehow chased out the Dark Forest, the Clans would still be prisoners. And with Magiclan ruling over them, Shadeheart would never be able to help. He hoped that never happened.

Rabbitstar shrugged. "Whatever you say... But just so you know Shadeheart, if I ever get the chance, I'm killing you." He spat at the

black tom. "Filthy spawn of evil."

Shadeheart unsheathed his claws, his golden eyes blazing with a sudden rage. "I'll have you killed first!"

"I guess we'll have to wait and see who's right." Rabbitstar smiled and turned away from the seething young warrior. "I'll see you around Shadeheart."

Blossomfur's POV:

Blossomfur watched as Shadeheart stormed away from Rabbitstar, leaving camp in a hurry. The cream furred she cat had the sudden impulse to follow her mate, but she decided he probably needed some time alone.

And I have kits to watch. Blossomfur sighed and looked down at her kits as they pawed at Bluesnow's little ones. *It's as if they know they're half siblings.* She frowned, watching the kits interact with each other. Bluesnow was sending her daggers with her eyes, but she ignored the blue she cat.

"Alright kits, the monster is gone now." Flowerstream meowed, her eyes scanning over the empty camp. "You may start exploring again, but be careful." She warned. "Don't upset any other Dark Forest warriors."

"We won't!" The kits sang in unison, bounding off to play some games together.

Chapter 19

Shadeheart's POV:

It was a full moon later. NoName was preparing a meeting to celebrate Hollowkit's apprentice ceremony a moon before his littermates. NoName's reasons were unknown, but Shadeheart knew they'd soon find out during the meeting. He hoped it had nothing to do with the time the small kit had been caught trying to let the prisoners into the main clearing. *But why would it be? This is hardly a punishment for Hollowkit! Being apprenticed a moon early is an honor!*

"Gather around." NoName's orutund voice rang from the meeting clearing, loud and clear.

Shadeheart- along with the rest of the Dark Forest cats- made their way to the clearing. They filed into their places, all silent with stone-cold expressions. Hollowkit was already at the foot of the meeting boulder, giddy with excitement.

Atop the boulder sat NoName with Dime and Flare flanking her, their cold eyes scanning the clearing. Beside Hollowkit sat Strike and Tyler, the two winged brothers resting in the shadow of the great rock, their red ans blue eyes almost menacing.

The remaining Enforcers took their places at the front of the crowd, leaving the rest of the warriors to squeeze into the back. Shadeheart found a spot between Rook and Honeyclaw. Behind him sat Stormcloud and Darksky. Bluestorm was on the other end of the crowd with Blazeheart and Nightwhisper.

"Cats of the Dark Forest." NoName began, her voice honeyed as she spoke above the light rustling from the breeze. "Here before you stands a strong young tom. He has proven to have significant courage, outperforming his littermates by far." The red she cat smiled slightly as Hollowkit grinned widely. "In fact, he has shown such courage that I have chosen to apprentice him early.."

The cheers started too early, cutting off the she cat's sentence. Her tail flicked once and the clearing fell into tense silence once more. Luckily, NoName seemed to let the incident go and continued with her speech. "Hollowkit will now be named Hollowpaw, and he will spend his days with the prisoners."

Hollowpaw's face fell immediately, his eyes growing wide in shock. "But-"

"You heard her, Clan sympathiser!" Strike hissed. "Now shut your mouth and quit whining."

Shadeheart rose to his paws to get a better look at the little black tom. He appeared to be on the verge of tears while NoName started speaking again, his ears pinned to the back of his head as he began wailing for Flowerstream.

"As you may have noticed, Hollowpaw was caught trying to let the prisoners escape. I can think of no better punishment than to let him rot in there with them." NoName gave a nod to Tyler and her brother stepped from the shadows, grabbing the wailing apprentice by his scruff. The winged Enforcer carried Hollowpaw out of the meeting clearing, leaving the crowd in a stunned silence.

"This meeting is over." NoName mewed, smiling wickedly. "I hope you all understand that Hollowpaw's kind of behaviour is worthy of a death penalty should any of you think of attempting it."

As the cats dispersed, Shadeheart took a moment to let it all sink in. So it was because of Hollowpaw's messup in the Prison! *This isn't fair! He's a kit!* The black tom flattened his ears and looked at his mother as she shuffled clumsily down the meeting rock.

She needs to be stopped..

Blossomfur's POV:

Blossomfur returned to find the nursery buzzing with excitement. She smiled slightly. They still didn't know of Hollowpaw's unfortunately turn of events.

"How was he? Who's his mentor?" Flowerstream asked, rising to meet Blossomfur by the cave entrance.

"NoName didn't give him a mentor." Blossomfur murmured, leaving the grey queen to connect the dots herself.

"Why?" Flowerstream demanded, her eyes narrowing.

"She said something about an incident with the prisoners.." The cream furred she cat shrugged, watching as Flowerstream's expression sank into a look of horror. "So now he's living with them."

As Blossomfur strolled into her nest, Flowerstream stood still as a statue, as if she couldn't believe the fate her kit had been given. The other queens went to comfort the older she cat as she wept for the imprisoned kit.

"He had it coming." Blossomfur mewed, looking at the other cats as she curled into a comfortable position to nap. "Deal with it."

Chapter 20

Silvershy's POV:

It appeared Silvershy's call for something interesting had been answered. Being locked inside the cramped prisoner den for so long had left her beyond bored, and she had been yearning for something new to happen for a few days now.

This 'something new' didn't bring her any happiness, but at least it brought some change.

Hollowpaw had joined their ranks. The poor young tom had hidden himself in the far side of the den, refusing to look at any of the other prisoners for some time. Shinewing and Marigoldfur had attempted to coax him out, but nothing worked. Hollowpaw still needed time to accept the prison as his new reality.

NoName was a monster for doing this to Hollowpaw. She deserved to be killed for lifting the young kit's spirits so high before destroying them. She was heartless and cruel. *But I will expect nothing less from a Dark Forest ruler like her.*

With a low sigh, the silver she cat stretched out in her nest, glancing back at Hollowpaw. He had turned around to watch the prisoners, but made no move to speak to them. Nobody said anything. They were all allowing Hollowpaw to settle in at his own pace. The tension was high in the air.

Silvershy blinked as she came up with an idea to pass the time. "Why don't we play a game?"

"A game?" Someone from the group scoffed. "Are you mad?"

"We're not kits." Another cat added.

Silvershy shrugged. "It's better than sitting around and doing nothing." *And hopefully it'll help Hollowpaw relax.*

"Wrenpaw?" Silvershy glanced at the youngest of the prisoners- besides Hollowpaw of course. "Can you think of anything?"

"Any games?" Wrenpaw shook her head. "No. You were free when you were an apprentice. What did you do?"

Silvershy forced down a pang of sorrow for the young she cat and murmured. "Let me think."

Hollowpaw's soft voice cut through her thoughts. "How about Find the Leaf?"

"Find the Leaf?" Cedarclaw's eyes narrowed in confusion. "That's a Smallclan game. How do you know about that?"

"Uh.." Hollowpaw frowned and looked at his small black paws. "I'm not sure. I just... Know." He refused to meet the Smallclan warrior's gaze. "I'm sorry, was it a bad game?"

"No it was actually quite fun." Cedarclaw responded. "Do you know the rules?"

"Mhm." The young black tom nodded his head, the small smile returning to his lips as he lifted gaze to Silvershy. "Do you want to play?"

"Of course." Silvershy smiled, glad that he was finally beginning to talk to them.

"Warmer.. warmer.." Silvershy meowed. "Hot!"

Hollowpaw froze, looking around. "Where'd you hide the leaf?" He muttered, glancing at the silver she cat.

Silvershy smiled. "You're standing on it."

Hollowpaw blinked in surprise and stepped away, looking at the moss he had been stepping on. The young tom rummaged through the moss, gasping as he found the hidden leaf. "I got it!" He squeaked, carrying it back to Silvershy proudly.

"Well done." Cedarclaw praised, smiling at the young apprentice. "This game is good for practising your tracking skills."

"Does that mean I hunt prey now?" Hollowpaw meowed eagerly, letting the leaf drop to the floor.

Silvershy frowned. "We can't hunt."

"Oh.. Oh yeah, I forgot." Hollowpaw sighed, sitting down in front of the silver warrior. "I'm sorry."

"No, I'm sorry you got into this mess. You deserve to be out there, training." Silvershy replied, reaching out with a paw to pat the young tom reassuringly.

Hollowpaw smiled softly at her. "I miss my brothers.. And Flowerstream.." His ears drooped with sadness. "Will I ever see them again?"

Silvershy took a while to reply. "I'm.. not sure. Maybe we can somehow persuade NoName to let you go." The silver she cat looked at the prison exit where the guard was keeping a watchful eye over them.

"Maybe." Hollowpaw responded, suddenly letting out a soft squeak as a loud crashing noise sounded from the main clearing.

The familiar low groan of a falling tree made Silvershy's fur stick up on end and she snapped to her paws just in time to hear the prison guard screech in terror. "We're under attack!!"

Chapter 21

Shadeheart's POV:

"We're under attack!" The cat guarding the prison screeched as Shadeheart raced out of the nursery. A tree had fallen into camp, barely missing NoName's den. *Thank the Stars.* Leaves and branches were still flying through the air, littering the ground as they dropped. Screams and cries rang through the camp as cats took cover, their eyes widened in terror.

Standing atop the tree was an unmistakable white tom, his icy blue eyes scanning over the clearing as panic swept through the Dark Forest warriors.

"It's Zeye!" NoName's yowl rose above the chaos, the small red she cat stumbling from her den. "Kill him!"

Shadeheart heard squeaks and hisses behind him and he spun around to see the kits and queens trying to investigate. He gasped, "Get back inside! Hide!"

"Zeye won't hurt us." Flowerstream meowed boldly, standing her ground. "We're innocent."

Shadeheart lashed his tail. "He's a crazy murderer."

"That's just what NoName's told you." Redleaf appeared behind Flowerstream. "The filthy lies she's told everyone."

Zeye's roaring voice broke through their conversation. "It's time you all paid!" He leapt from the fallen tree, landing lightly on the ground. "The clans will be set free today!"

"Get back in the nursery!" Shadeheart yowled at the queens, turning back to see them reluctantly backing away into the darkness. He breathed a small sigh of relief before looking back at Zeye. He was one cat against an entire camp of ruthless warriors.

As cats began throwing themselves at the seemingly defenseless tom, a shimmering blue forcefield sprung up around Zeye, encircling him. The Dark Forest warriors slammed into the nearly invisible shield with howls of pain as their paws and faces were seared.

Shadeheart stayed by the nursery entrance, guarding it. The fight was only tail-lengths away- with the fallen tree taking up half of the camp the warriors were left with little room to attack Zeye in. None of them could get past the blue forcefield.

He also noticed how none of the Enforcers were moving to attack. What were they waiting for? What was their plan to get past the shield?

Shadeheart let his claws unsheath and sink into the ground. He didn't know who to root for. His instinctual reaction would be to side with the Dark Forest. *This.. This crazy powerful tom has broken into our camp, tried to assassinate my mother with a tree and is now fighting my friends!* But after more thought, Shadeheart knew that Zeye's goal was his goal too. The Clans' freedom. *But what do I do? I can't attack Zeye, not if I want to gain his trust in the future.. However, I can't blatantly take his side with NoName around.*

"Shadeheart?" Blossomfur's soft voice whispered in his ear, knocking him from his thoughts just in time to see Zeye throwing Coldkit into the air, letting the small pale tom to hit the ground with a sickening crunch.

Shadeheart flinched and turned away as the warrior's wails filled the air. "Blossomfur.." He looked up into her pale green eyes. "Go back into the den."

"No. The kits are safe. I want to help my clan fight this monster." Blossomfur meowed, her ears flattening. "I won't let Zeye take our happiness away."

Shadeheart bit his lip. "Don't go anywhere near him Blossomfur. You could be killed."

"I could say the same to you." She snorted.

The dark furred tom huffed, trying to find a way to tell her to go back to safety. "But Blossomfur."

They were interrupted by Mystery's shrill cries. "Mercy! Mercy! Please!" The Dark Forest she cat had been lifted into the air by Zeye, with glowing blue mist hanging around her floating body.

"Did any of you show mercy to all the innocent lives you took when you conquered the Clans?" Zeye snarled at the she cat, raising her higher with a flick of his paw.

The other warriors were banging against the shield, desperate to get to Zeye and stop him from killing Mystery. Shadeheart stared at the white tom in horror. *Is he going to do it?*

With a jolt, Shadeheart saw a blur of cream fur racing for Zeye. "Blossomfur!" He gasped, leaping after her. "No! Come back!" He pounded his paws against the ground, racing to grab her before she drew Zeye's attention to her.

It was too late. Zeye's piercing blue eyes slid slowly to Blossomfur as she screeched at him. "Let her go you monster!"

Shadeheart skidded into Blossomfur, nearly falling over from the force of his stop. "Blossomf-" He stammered, his voice evaporating completely as Zeye suddenly let his shield drop. It happened within a heartbeat, too fast for anyone to react. Mystery was tossed aside. Zeye flicked a forepaw and Blossomfur was dragging towards him. Once the cream she cat was secured under his paw, Zeye raised the shield again. Nobody had been able to stop him in time.

"No!" Shadeheart gasped, slamming his paws against the shield- and regretting his action immediately as his pawpads screamed in pain. "Give her back!" He cried, his heart thumping in his chest as he met Blossomfur's terrified gaze. "Let her go!"

Zeye meowed sternly, silencing the chaotic yowling. "Shadeheart." His blue eyes met Shadeheart's golden ones, and a hint of sadness flickered briefly in the light blue depths, barely noticeable. "This is your mate, yes?"

Shadeheart nodded his head silently, fearing he'd end up crying if he opened his mouth to speak.

Zeye looked down at Blossomfur a small grin rising on his lips. "You're filth. You're scum. You don't deserve life for siding with the Dark Forest." His claws trailed over her cheeks, slipping down to her neck.

Shadeheart's heart leapt into his throat. "N-no!" He choked out. "She has kits!" He prayed Zeye cared about kits more than his mindless revenge.

"I'm sure they've been weaned by now." Zeye growled. "You can care for them now, Shadeheart. Be a responsible father."

As Zeye's claws pressed harder against Blossomfur's neck, Shadeheart tried again to throw himself against the shield. "Please! Kill me instead!" He begged. "Don't kill her!"

His words seemed to distract Zeye successfully. The white tom lifted his claws away from Blossomfur. "How noble. Giving your life to save your selfish, controlling and abusive mate." He shook his head, as if in shame. "I'll decline your offer. Blossomfur would be much better dead instead of you."

As he leaned back down to give Blossomfur the killing blow, Strike and Tyler suddenly dove into the shield from above, somehow breaking through the shimmering blue mist with the force of their descent.

Zeye cursed as the two winged Enforcers landed on him. "Impossible!" He threw the brothers off him, the force field fading as his full attention turned to Strike and Tyler.

Chapter 22

Shadeheart's POV:

Shadeheart scrambled to Blossomfur's side, smothering the cream she cat in licks and nuzzles. "I'm so glad you're okay!" He whispered. "I was so worried."

Blossomfur clung to him, her pale green eyes meeting his gaze. "Don't leave my side again." She murmured, stammering slightly from fear.

Shadeheart tried to argue that she was in fact the one who had left him, but he sighed and nodded. "I promise I will protect you with my life. I won't ever leave your side."

"Now let's get back to our kits." The light furred she cat struggled to her paws. Shadeheart stood beside her, supporting her as they hurried back to the nursery.

"Is she okay?" Flowerstream asked as they darted into the nursery tunnel.

"She's fine. Just shaken." Shadeheart meowed, looking at his mate. She nodded in confirmation, stepping away from him to rejoin her kits. "Watch her." Shadeheart mumbled to Flowerstream. "Keep her here."

"Are you going back out there?" Flowerstream asked, frowning in disapproval.

"Of course. I'm a warrior of the Dark Forest. I have to join the fight." The dark furred tom responded, already stepping back out into the main clearing.

"Be careful." Flowerstream muttered after him, sticking to the shadows of the tunnel. "Don't get killed."

Shadeheart didn't reply. Instead he took off at a fast pace across the

clearing, sneaking around the outskirts of the battle to reach NoName. His mother was taking shelter behind the tree with Dime, Flare and Zephyr sitting guard with her.

"Shadeheart." NoName reached out for him and encircled him in a hug. "Thank Star- I mean.. I'm glad you're safe." The red she cat stuttered, her fur immediately growing hot with embarrassment.

"Still can't let go of your clan?" Flare muttered to her sister, smiling mockingly. *Crimsonstar."*

NoName's fur bristled and she snarled. "Quiet!"

Shadeheart glanced between the two sisters, curious about their pasts once again. His mother had been vague about her past life, as if it brought her shame. Maybe one day he'd be able to get the whole story out of her...

Turning back to the fight, Shadeheart saw Zeye in an intense battle with Strike and Tyler, and the other warriors who occasionally attempted to intervene. He watched in awe as the winged brothers dodged all of Zeye's attacks, speeding through the air with erratic beats of their wings.

Unfortunately Strike and Tyler grew tired from the stressful flying, and that's when Zeye struck. The white furred Promethean raised both paws, grabbing both toms in an invisible hold. They flailed to escape, but could do nothing as they were thrown onto the ground. They went limp, knocked out cold.

Shadeheart realised he had stopped breathing and quickly took in a shaky gulp of the blood-tainted air. He stared at the limp bodies of his uncles. They didn't stir as Zeye loomed over them to examine the damage he had done. A blue, misty dome surrounded the white tom, preventing any other attacks.

NoName cried. "Are they dead?"

"Just unconscious." Zephyr reported, not moving from his spot a few tail-lengths away. He lowered his voice so that only they could hear him. "Zeye won't kill them."

"He's coming." Flare hissed suddenly, rising to her paws.

Shadeheart turned just in time to see Zeye striding towards them. The Dark Forest warriors slunk after him, keeping their distance. Two bloodied bodies lay on the ground, dead. *Mystery and Coldkit.*

"NoName." Zeye growled. "It's time your reign comes to an end." But the white tom stopped moving as Flare and Zephyr took defensive stances in front of NoName, Dime and Shadeheart. "Move out of the way." He snarled softly.

Flare snapped defiantly. "Leave our camp!" The golden she cat crouched into an attack stance, her wings unfurling from her back and stretching out on either side of her.

Shadeheart moved to help the two Enforcers but NoName held him back. "Don't." She ordered, her white eyes glued to Zeye. "Stay here. With me."

"I can help them." Shadeheart muttered, pulling against the red she cat.

His mother's gaze fixed on him and he immediately grew still. She was terrified. Hadn't she known this day would eventually come? She should have prepared for it!

Zeye's voice rose into the tense air once again. "If you had left Hollowpaw alone I wouldn't have attacked today." The white tom glared at NoName. "Throwing an innocent kit into prison is cruel and it will have consequences." He took a step closer, hissing as Zephyr let out a warning growl.

"You're out-numbered." Zephyr meowed calmly. "Come back some other time."

Zeye bared his teeth at the grey furred Promethean. "You're stronger than before." He observed quietly, his body more still than death. "But that doesn't mean anything."

Flare hissed. "Enough of this! Just get out of here."

Zeye smiled and rolled his eyes. "Actually I think I'll stay and fight."

Then he launched himself at Flare.

Chapter 23

Shadeheart's POV:

Flare screeched and kicked at Zeye as he knocked her down. Shadeheart lunged to help Flare, but he was thrown backwards by blue mist, landing safely on Zephyr. The grey Enforcer spat at him furiously as the two toms were left in a tangled mess.

"Get off me!" Zephyr snarled, pushing Shadeheart off him. "And don't get in my way!" The Promethean snapped to his paws and turned to face Zeye. The white tom had Flare pinned down on her belly, his claws tearing through her wings with unnatural strength and viciousness. Orange feathers flew in all directions, singed by the thick blue mist that hung around the two fighting cats.

"Flare!" Zephyr yowled, trying to get past Zeye's defenses. NoName was wailing in the background, but made no move to help her sister. Dime stuck close to his mate's side, his green eyes troubled. Shadeheart stumbled backwards to his mother, knowing he would only get in the way if he tried to help his aunt.

Flare's screeches filled the air as Zeye mauled her wings. Zephyr threw himself against the shields, his red eyes stretched wide, but nothing worked. "Flare!" He yowled again. "Hold on!"

Miraculously, Flare managed to escape Zeye's grip for a brief second. The pregnant she cat stumbled away from the white tom, her chest heaving from the effort. This gave Zephyr the chance to strike Zeye. Shadeheart's claws sank into the ground, pulling at the soil anxiously as the fight drew on.

A cat made of red mist broke away from Zephyr's body, lunging for Zeye. Instinctually, the white Promethean attacked the illusion, clawing it out of existence, just in time for the real Zephyr to attack.

Zeye was thrown on his back for a heartbeat, but quickly regained his footing, tossing Zephyr back by a few tail-lengths. Zephyr

landed on his paws, immediately launching another attack. He dodged the flurries of blue mist Zeye threw at him, landing a successful blow to the white tom's chest. Zeye didn't flinch from the attack, but he did hiss in anger. The once untouchable, immortal Promethean had met an opponent worthy of effort.

"I see you've improved your illusions." Zeye snarled at Zephyr. "Now everyone else can see them as bright as day."

"Yes, isn't it wonderful?" Zephyr laughed to himself, pacing from side to side as the two toms prepared to attack again.

Flare had dragged herself to NoName, Dime and Shadeheart. The winged she cat couldn't stand, and she was bleeding heavily from the countless slices in her wings. Chunks of raw skin showed where all the feathers had been ripped off. Shadeheart shivered and rest his tail comfortingly on the orange she cat's forelegs. "We'll get you fixed up."

NoName seemed to find her voice at last, but it came out as a small squeak. "Yes. We'll get the best medicine cats to heal you."

"You have to get out of here." Flare muttered, not looking at her sister. "Unless you want Zeye to kill you."

"Zephyr will take care of him." NoName replied. "I'm sure of it. There's no need to worry."

Flare sighed. "Alright, suit yourself." She looked up at Shadeheart. "Help me get to Tyler and Strike?"

Shadeheart nodded. "Of course." He padded over to the winged she cat, letting her stand against him. She wobbled on her paws, but managed to stay steady.

Shadeheart glanced at Zeye and Zephyr. The two Prometheans were giving it all they had. Zeye stayed securely in the defensive, hiding in a dome of blue mist while Zephyr threw illusions at him, trying to spook the white tom into attacking.

"You're weak!" Zephyr mocked, sending a swarm of red mist at the blue dome. "Has your old age finally caught up with you?"

Zeye bared his teeth. "You're the weak one."

"Oh yeah?" Zephyr snarled, his breath starting to become heavy as he grew tired from the constant attacking. "Prove it!"

"Gladly." Zeye's dome dropped and Zephyr- unprepared and exhausted- had no time to react as the white furred tom grabbed him in an invisible grip, blue mist rising around him.

"Gah!" Zephyr gasped, writhing against the mist. "Let me go!" He tried to free himself by sending red, misty illusions after Zeye, but they no longer affected his enemy.

"I'm impressed by how easy it was to trick you." Zeye grinned at Zephyr. "You sure are a poor excuse for a Promethean." He lifted the grey tom higher into the air. "How about a quick death for you?"

"I doubt you'd bless me with that." Zephyr growled. "After all, I did kill your brother, Zerec. Do you remember? I can retell the story if you want." His lips formed a light smirk.

Zeye's muscles tensed. "Shut up." The white tom meowed, his voice suddenly strained.

Shadeheart realised he had been standing still, and quickly turned to leave but Flare muttered. "Wait! Look at that!"

The black furred tom glanced back at the Prometheans to see pale green mist snatch Zephyr right from Zeye's blue mist. The source of the green mist was unknown, but it definitely came from another Promethean.

"Show yourself!" Zeye snarled, trying to regain control over Zephyr's floating body.

"Why should I?" A she cat's voice echoed from the bushes near the edge of camp. "You'd kill me."

Zeye's ears flattened. "You can't hide from me!" He forgot about Zephyr entirely, lunging for the bushes. Shadeheart gasped as he landed on them, a high-pitched cry ringing out as he found his

target...

But suddenly Zeye was back in his original spot, yelling, "Show yourself!"

Nobody seemed to notice the sudden jump back in time, not even Shadeheart.

This time, the she cat did not reply. Instead, the green mist faded away as quickly as it had appeared, letting Zephyr drop to the ground. The grey tom attempted to get up, but Zeye held him down once again, his blue eyes blazing with rage. "Whoever did that will pay!"

No one replied. It appeared that the strange wielder of the pale green mist had fled just as swiftly as she had arrived.

Zeye snarled at Zephyr. "I'll deal with you later." Before the grey tom could argue, he was rendered unconscious and tossed out of camp, into the forest.

Shadeheart took that as his cue to yowl. "Let's get out of here! Now!" But it was too late. NoName was a fool for relying on Zephyr to sort her problems out.

Chapter 24

Shadeheart's POV:

Being several steps ahead, Shadeheart and Flare made it to safety around the other side of the fallen tree where Tyler and Strike were still knocked out on the floor. The other Dark Forest warriors were hiding in the shadows, shaken up from the attack. That left the Magiclan cats and the Ghost Collective to secure the prisoners and stop them from using this as an escape.

As Shadeheart set Flare down beside her brothers, NoName's voice rang from the tree. "You wouldn't dare try to kill me!"

Zeye's reply was muffled, so Shadeheart risked moving closer so he could get a better view of the conflict. He wanted to help his mother so badly, but they were dealing with a force greater than an army of normal cats. It was better to hang back and listen instead of risking injury and death.

He was surprised Zeye had come alone but then again, he didn't need anyone else. He had basically sent the Dark Forest into chaos by himself.

"Shadeheart, oh thank the stars you're okay!" Bluestorm, Darksky and Stormcloud bounded up to their friend, engulfing him in their fur. "Is Blossomfur safe? Bluesnow? The kits?"

"Yes, yes." Shadeheart meowed, taking a step back to see Blazeheart and Nightwhisper approaching with distracted expressions on their faces. "The nursery is safe, everyone there is okay."

"So the only casualties so far have been Coldkit and Mystery?" Darksky mewed.

"Looks like it." Shadeheart murmured, glancing at the bloody bodies that lay close by.

"Zephyr isn't dead?" Blazeheart asked, his eyes narrowing.

"No.. Why?"

"Thought Zeye would kill him immediately in revenge for his brother." The orange tom shrugged.

"How do you know about that? You weren't at the battle." Shadeheart tilted his head in confusion.

"You weren't either." Nightwhisper countered. "You weren't even born when Zerec was killed."

"But neither were you!"

"Enough of this." Bluestorm snapped, her tail lashing. "We obviously heard it all from the nursery tales Flowerstream used to tell us."

Shadeheart frowned. *But they joined us when we were apprentices.* He didn't say anything aloud, and he let the subject drop.

"Anyway, where is Zephyr now? I can't see him." Blazeheart sighed.

"In the forest.." Shadeheart pointed with his paw. "Zeye threw him in there."

Blazeheart and Nightwhisper exchanged looks before Blazeheart muttered. "We should go look for him."

"You can." Shadeheart replied. "I'm staying to help NoName."

"I'd strongly advise you stay out of this Shadeheart. Stay in Zeye's neutral books." Nightwhisper warned. "Don't bring unnecessary attention to yourself."

Stormcloud came to Shadeheart's defense. "Do you think Shadeheart's stupid? Of course he'll stay out of trouble."

Blazeheart and Nightwhisper didn't respond. Instead they turned in unison and trotted to the camp exit, leaving the clearing. It was oddly calm despite having a rampaging Promethean attempting to destroy NoName on the other side of the tree.

Darksky joined Shadeheart in the shelter of the fallen tree, looking through the tangled branches and leaves. "Whoa, look at that."

Shadeheart followed her gaze to where Zeye had Dime and NoName pinned under a glimmering blue forcefield. The two Dark Forest leaders wriggled and writhed, but could not escape.

"You've imprisoned the Clans for too long." Zeye snarled down at them. "Today, they will be freed, and NoName will die." He unsheathed his claws, his blue eyes glowing brighter as he bared his teeth at them.

NoName hissed as she clawed at the blue mist. Her shadows swarmed around her, pulsing against the forcefield. "You can't kill me! I still have Nutwhisker's soul! If you kill me, he's gone! For good!"

Her words seemed to stop Zeye in his tracks. Shadeheart blinked in surprise as the white tom sheathed his claws again. "I.. don't.. care. If it means you're removed from this world, then so be it."

Seeing his sudden change in mood, NoName latched on like a leach. "You don't really think that. I know you care for Nutwhisker." She smiled slyly, her white eyes locking with his blue gaze. "And I can bring him back."

"How?" Zeye asked immediately his eyes widening in desperation. "How?!"

"Why should I tell you?" The red she cat mewed, stalling. Shadeheart felt his heart rate pick up. Was she lying? Or could she actually bring a cat's soul back from the shadows?

As Zeye replied, his voice strained with distress, Shadeheart overheard Secretstar talking to Goatpaw. "Yeah, Rabbitstar and I are totally together. But don't tell him I said that."

Darksky heard them as well and snorted with laughter, turning to look at the Magiclan cats. "Mind chatting about your relationships some other time? We happen to be at war."

Secretstar stuck his tongue out as the black she cat. "Mind your own

business."

Darksky turned back to Shadeheart. "Maybe if they'd talk a little quieter, I would."

Chapter 25

Shadeheart's POV:

"Leave." NoName ordered, growing bolder suddenly.

Zeye hissed in frustration. He had been completely thrown off-guard with Nutwhisker being mentioned. Would a dead medicine cat actually make Zeye lose the fight?

Shadeheart watched as the white Promethean took a step back. "If I can't kill you..." He glanced at her den. "I'll take your rabbit."

"No!" NoName screeched, breaking through the blue mist to catch Zeye, but he had already blinked into her den. The red she cat scrambled after him, screaming for Velvet.

As NoName reached her den, Zeye stepped out. Velvet was suspended in the air above his head, frozen in fear. NoName wailed. "Let her go! Please don't hurt her!" She tried to jump up and grab Velvet, but the small she cat could barely jump higher than Zeye himself.

Dime hung back, tending to what looked like a twisted forepaw. Seeing Zeye was distracted, Shadeheart chambered over the tree to get to his father. "Are you okay?"

"I'm fine." Dime muttered, not looking at him. He kept his gaze on NoName.

Zeye smirked widely, moving Velvet above NoName. The red she cat leapt for her bunny, but she was just out of reach. "Give her to me!" She begged.

"Okay." Zeye lifted both forepaws up and spread them apart, quickly. Velvet was torn in two within a heartbeat, blood and gore showering down ontop of NoName.

The red she cat screamed. "NO! Velvet!" She slipped on the flesh

and blood that had fallen on the floor around her, and fell clumsily on her side. Her pelt turned an even darker red as Velvet's blood coated her. Zeye let the two pieces of the bunny fall on NoName, resting the head right at the she cat's muzzle.

"I'll be taking Hollowpaw and leaving now. Thank you for your hospitality." Zeye grinned and padded away. No cat stopped him as he strolled into the prison and walked back out with Hollowpaw floating above him. The young black tom was protesting, confused as to why the strange Promethean was taking him away.

Shadeheart glanced at Dime. "What do we do?"

"Leave it. Let's not escalate the problem any further." His father let out a weary sigh, his ears flattening as he nursed his injured paw. "Right now we need to re-establish order, and serve out some well-earned punishments."

"To whom?" Shadeheart asked curiously.

"The warriors who were too afraid to fight." Dime replied. "We can't have any weakness here. They must know that." He finally turned to meet his son's golden gaze. "Go get the medicine cats to heal the wounded."

Shadeheart dipped his head and trotted away from Dime, ducking into the prison to see them bustling with excitement.

"What's going on? Is the Dark Forest defeated? Is NoName dead?" Silvershy asked immediately, appearing before him.

"Zeye's left with Hollowpaw. NoName is unharmed. Coldkit and Mystery were killed. Flare's been badly injured and Tyler and Strike are unconscious. Dime has a sprained paw and Zephyr has been thrown somewhere into the forest." Shadeheart reported, sighing heavily once he had finished.

The den was left in stunned silence. Eventually, Silvershy murmured. "So we're still not free?"

"Unfortunately not." Shadeheart mumbled, hanging his head. "Not yet." He quickly added, not wanting to completely crush their

spirits.

"I suppose the injured cats will need us?" Marigoldfur sighed, rising to her paws. The weathered medicine cat had a sombre expression on her face, but her eyes were clear. She knew she had a job to do, and that hope was still alive. Shinewing and Wrenpaw joined the older she cat with herb bundles in their jaws.

Shadeheart silently led the way out of the prison. The cat guarding the entrance gave him a sneer as he passed. He ignored it with a low sigh, leading the medicine cats to the wounded cats.

As the three she cat set to work healing the injured, Shadeheart returned to his mother. She was still laying in the drying pool of Velvet's blood, sobbing to herself. Dime was sitting a few tail-lengths away, his lips curled in anger and frustration. Shadeheart frowned down at NoName. She was a mess.

He was so distracted that he didn't even notice Rabbitstar's menacing approach behind them.

Blossomfur's POV:

Where is Shadeheart? Blossomfur's tail lashed in anger. *Does he not care about me at all?* She looked down at her kits as they played, oblivious to her anger towards their father. *I'm going to make him apologise when he finally gets in here to comfort me!*

"What's your problem?" Bluesnow demanded, glaring at Blossomfur.

"None of your business!" Blossomfur snapped, lashing her tail. *I still can't believe Shadeheart likes a stupid cat like her! What could he possibly see in her that I don't give him?*

Flowerstream murmured. "Someone's a bit prickly."

"Shut up!" Blossomfur snarled, unsheathing her claws, much to her kits' distress. "It's not my fault Shadeheart still hasn't arrived to see if I'm alright!"

The other three queens in the den exchanged glances. Flowerstream murmured. "Maybe he's just busy."

"Stop being so reliant on him." Redleaf growled. "You don't need your mate by your side all the time. Let him have a life as well!"

"Yeah!" Flamekit squeaked, bouncing on Redleaf's back. "Mumma doesn't have Papa! So you don't need Shadeheart either!"

Blossomfur growled softly, suddenly realising that apart from Bluesnow, the other two queens had lost their mates. They had to raise their kits alone. For a moment she felt a spark of sympathy for them, but it faded quickly, smothered by her anger.

"Just because you're suffering doesn't mean I have to suffer with you! I've already suffered enough!" Blossomfur forced her fur to lie flat on her back despite her anger.

"Oh no," Redleaf mocked her, "Shadeheart took an extra five seconds to show up. Time to whine and cry about it!"

"Shut up." Blossomfur snapped back, glaring at the red she cat. "You don't know how I feel."

"We all do." Redleaf muttered. "Because, funnily enough, you like sharing your drama with everyone, instead of keeping it to yourself."

Chapter 26

Shadeheart's POV:

"Hey." Rabbitstar growled, making Shadeheart spin around to face the brown furred tom. The Magiclan leader had one of their warriors in his hold. Lostpaw. The young she cat was limp in the brown tom's hold, bleeding heavily from a nasty head wound.

Dime strode over to Rabbitstar. "What are you doing?" He asked, his voice low and demanding. NoName didn't even notice; she was too busy wallowing in her bunny's guts.

"Hand over the prisoners to me, and leave this camp. Lightclan is mine!" Rabbitstar snarled, giving Lostpaw a shake. "Or I'll slaughter all your warriors, one by one!"

Dime snorted with laughter. "You're not serious." The dark furred tom meowed. "You're severely outnumbered. We'll crush you in a heartbeat."

"I beg to differ." Rabbitstar responded, glancing behind him at the other cats. Coldkit and Mystery's bodies lay in the sun, unattended. Flare, Strike and Tyler were still being healed. Tigerstripe was no where to be seen and Zephyr was probably dead in that forest. A fair amount of the Dark Forest warriors were missing, including The Ghost Collective. Things were suddenly a lot more even.

Shadeheart shivered as Rabbitstar's pine green gaze travelled back to them. "Leave now, and Lostpaw will live."

"Lostpaw's life on the line won't change a thing. We are staying." Dime replied firmly. "You are the one leaving when this is all over."

"I'd rather not wait that long." Rabbitstar smiled, digging his claws into Lostpaw's neck. The young she cat let out a strangled scream before her body was tossed aside like crowfood. Rabbitstar smirked widely as he turned around to face the rest of the camp. "Magiclan

attack!"

_____

Silvershy's POV:

"Magiclan attack!" Rabbitstar's voice echoed throughout camp, making the hairs rise on the back of Silvershy's neck.

"Now's our chance!" Vixen crashed into the den. "We can escape now! With the Dark Forest weakened from Zeye, and distracted by Magiclan, we can all make it out!"

Silvershy joined Vixen in a heartbeat, adrenaline coursing through her veins. "Let's do this!" They were going to be free at last!

The rest of the prisoners found the strength to rally behind the two she cats. The weaker cats were moved into the middle of the group, shielded by the more healthy warriors.

"We will be Clans once more." Dapplegrey meowed, her eyes shining with hope.

"Follow me!" Vixen ordered, taking the lead through the den, bursting out of the entrance with a gracefully leap. She landed on the warrior guarding the den, her claws tearing viciously through his throat. Silvershy flinched as thick blood splattered Vixen's fox-red pelt, but she continued to stand by her side while she made sure the warrior was dead.

"We have to get to the nursery and rescue the others!" Marigoldfur suddenly hissed, breaking away from her sheltered spot with Shinewing and Wrenpaw.

"No, stop!" Silvershy gasped, darting after the old medicine cat. "You can't! They're safer here than out there! The kits are too young to come with us!"

Marigoldfur stared at Silvershy in horror. "They are our clan mates! We can't leave them here!"

"We'll come back for them." Vixen growled, angrily. "Now get back

in line or you're being left behind! We've already wasted too much time!"

Silvershy glanced away from Marigoldfur to see the Dark Forest warriors too busy fighting Magiclan to notice them. *But that won't last forever.* The silver she cat muttered. "Please, trust me, we will come back for them. But not now. We have to make it out! We don't have much time!" Her voice rose to a desperate squeak. "We can't stay here any longer!"

"No." Marigoldfur snarled at Silvershy. "You have betrayed the Warrior Code by abandoning these queens and kits." The golden medicine turned and sprinted away, disappearing into the nursery.

Silvershy tried to go after her, but Vixen's voice stopped her. "Let her go. She has a death wish. Would you rather join her or escape with us?"

Wrenpaw suddenly squeaked. "Look out!"

Silvershy snapped her gaze to where the small apprentice was pointing to see Rook and Sparrow both lunging for Vixen. Just in time, the red she cat saw their attack and slipped to the side, muttering a curse under her breath.

"What are you doing?" Vixen snarled at her former companions as they stood menacingly before her.

"Did you really think we didn't suspect something?" Rook snarled at the she cat, his claws unsheathed. "We knew you were on their side!"

Vixen was thrown off-guard with their statement. "How could you possibly know?"

"We've lived with you our whole lives. We know when you're lying." Sparrow crouched into an attack position. "And you're going to pay for your disloyalty towards NoName!"

The two large toms charged for their former leader in unison. Silvershy leapt to help Vixen, but Secretstar came out of nowhere, knocking her to the ground. "You're mine!" The striped tom snarled

down at her. "All of you are mine and I won't let you escape my grasp!" Goatpaw and Ratbreeze flanked the Magiclan tom, slowly encircling and herding the prisoners into a tight ball.

Struggling in Secretstar's grip, Silvershy glanced at Vixen. She was holding herself surprisingly well against the two ruthless toms. She had a couple of nasty scratches on her haunches, but she had returned the scratches with double the effect on both of her enemies.

Secretstar's claws tore down her side, sending red-hot flashes of pain through her body. Silvershy kicked and wriggled, managing to break free from the tabby. She stumbled to her paws, blood already soaking her side.

"Goatpaw!" Secretstar snarled. "Get her! Just like we practiced!"

The small Magiclan apprentice lunged for the wounded she cat while Secretstar leapt away to contain the rebelling prisoners. Silvershy swatted at Goatpaw, swaying clumsily on her paws. She lashed her striped tail as the apprentice's claws dug into her chest, but his blow was restrained; almost gentle. He didn't want to hurt a nearly defenseless opponent.

Silvershy looked into Goatpaw's eyes to see he was petrified. She lowered her head as a sign of friendliness, hoping he'd follow her lead. "You don't need to hurt me. I won't hurt you."

"You don't understand!" Goatpaw squeaked, not backing down from her. "I have to do this!"

"You don't." Silvershy meowed firmly, staring at him. She tried to block out Vixen's hisses and yowls as she fought bravely against Sparrow and Rook. "Join us. You can be free from Magiclan." She offered.

Goatpaw shook his head, his eyes wide. "I can't. They'll hurt me! Please, stop talking!"

Silvershy hissed as Goatpaw suddenly lunged for her, his teeth sinking into her shoulder. She fell onto the ground, kicking at him.

"You don't have to do this!" She gasped.

Goatpaw didn't reply. He was clawing at her, desperation in his eyes. What had his clan mates done to him to make him so frightened?

From the corner of her eye, Silvershy saw Vixen break away from Rook and Sparrow. Both toms were on their knees, bleeding and panting. The red she cat glanced at Silvershy and Goatpaw before lunging for the young apprentice..

Chapter 27

Silvershy's POV:

Vixen landed on Goatpaw, ripping the young tom off of Silvershy. In a heartbeat, the rogue had her claws in Goatpaw's throat. Goatpaw yowled and blood splattered the ground as she tore through his neck.

The sharp scent of blood made the back of Silvershy's throat sting. She looked up at Vixen, still laying on her side. The rogue she cat panted, her eyes dull with exhaustion. Blood trickled down the side of her mouth- whether it was Goatpaw's or her own, she didn't know. "You can thank me later." The red she cat wheezed, turning on shaky paws to face Rook and Sparrow again. The rush of adrenaline from only moments before had been drained, and Silvershy knew Vixen was taking her final breaths.

The sounds of fighting cats surrounded them, but somehow, no one interrupted their fight. It was like they were in an invisible bubble, safe from outside harm. Silvershy glanced away from Vixen to look at Goatpaw's body. His eyes were closed, his body limp, lifeless. Dark red blood pooled around him, licking at Silvershy's paws, staining them red. But other than that he looked peaceful. As if he were merely asleep.

Vixen's gasp brought her attention back to the present. Silvershy turned her striped head in her direction to see Rook force his former leader onto her back, exposing her soft belly fur. "You're worse than all of these filthy prisoners combined." Rook spat in her face. "You're lower than dirt."

"At least I'm not traitorous scum like you." Vixen snarled up at the two toms. "Who, by the way, still cannot beat me one-to-one. I can't wait to see you get slaughtered by NoName the moment you let your loyalty slip."

"You'll be watching from the afterlife, unfortunately." Sparrow

snickered, sinking his claws into her neck. Vixen clawed at him, but he kept his claws in her flesh. Silvershy gasped in horror as Sparrow dragged his claws achingly slowly through her neck. Blood swelled around his claws, dripping onto the ground. Rook stood beside them, with a sick grin.

As Vixen took her final, ragged breath, Sparrow lifted his claws away. The rogue gave his bloody claws a small lick, purring with delight. "It feels good to finally kill her." He commented, his gaze sliding to Silvershy. "Now what do we do with you?"

"Should we leave her to bleed to deah?" Rook replied, glancing behind Silvershy as the other prisoners being rounded up by the others. "It looks like they need more help over there."

"Suppose we shouldn't upset NoName just yet." Sparrow sighed regretfully, padding past Silvershy. His tail tickled her whiskers. "Be a good prisoner and stay put." He ordered before leaping into the fray to secure the other Clan prisoners.

Silvershy growled. "Stay put?" She said to herself, scoffing slightly. "I'm leaving." The silver she cat rose unsteadily to her paws. The blood on her side was beginning to dry already, which was good. Hopefully it would heal okay. She took a couple of staggering steps towards the camp exit, wondering if anyone would notice her escape.

No one stopped her.

Am I actually free at last? She wondered, stepping clumsily over Goatpaw's body with a slight gasp for air. *Will I make it out?*

As she passed Vixen's body, she murmured softly. "Thank you for giving us a chance. Your sacrifice wasn't in vain." She hoped Vixen heard her, wherever she might be, post-death.

Silvershy quickened her pace, stumbling across the blood-stained clearing. Still, no one stopped her. They were so wrapped up with battling Magiclan that they didn't even care to notice her. *I'm gonna make it!*

But suddenly, the silver she cat tripped over something. It was a body. Coldkit's dead body. The small white tom lay in a mangled heap; the aftermath of Zeye's attack. She frowned. He was from the Dark Forest, he deserved death, right? But seeing him like that made her sorrowful. How much pain and terror had he gone through before dying? Could his death be justified?

"Hey! You!" One of the Dark Forest warriors snarled. "Get back here!"

"No!" Silvershy gasped, scrambling to get to her paws again. Her side screamed in pain from the effort, but she rose again and began stumbling for the entrance. "You can't catch me! I won't let you!" She cried, tears forming in her eyes. She was only a few steps away from freedom! She could make it! *Please Starclan! Help me!*

Claws dug into her haunches, dragging her to the ground. Silvershy shrieked and twisted around to claw her attacker, but she couldn't reach him, thanks to her side wound. The dried blood had been replaced with new, fresh blood that now poured from the wound and dripped onto the floor. Silvershy scratched desperately at the ground, her claws cutting deep into the soil. "Let me go!" She cried, tears falling down her cheeks. "I'm not going back in there!"

"Then I'll just put you out of your misery!" The tom reached out and dug his teeth into the back of her neck. Silvershy let out an ear-splitting scream, wriggling and kicking as hard as she could. She ignored the searing pain in her side, focusing all her strength into staying alive and escaping.

As blood warmed the back of her neck, Silvershy heard a sickening crunch in her ears and the tom suddenly went limp, flattening her with all his weight. She panted heavily, choking back cries as she managed to wriggle away from the dead warrior. His neck had been snapped. *Who killed him?* She wondered, but her mind was hazy and her sight was darkening slowly. Black dots formed in the edges of hee vision, threatening to take over.

Silvershy couldn't stand. She tried multiple times, but she couldn't find the strength in her limbs to hold her steadily. She was left to crawl for her life, out of camp. The exit loomed tall above her,

staring down at her menacingly. The world spun around her, but the exit stayed clearly in sight. She had to make it out alive!

But just as she placed a paw into the exit tunnel, darkness consumed her.

Chapter 28

Shadeheart's POV:

Shadeheart stood guard beside Flare, Tyler and Strike. The wounded Enforcers were barely able to stand, let alone fight. Luckily, few Magiclan warriors threatened them. They were mostly ignored despite being in the centre of the clearing, out in the open.

Dime was fighting with Rabbitstar, keeping the brown furred leader away from his mate. Zephyr was still no where to be seen and Tigerstripe had fled camp, probably forever, knowing him. There were no Enforcers left to defend them!

He prayed that Blossomfur was safe in the nursery, and that she wouldn't be too mad at him for not being there for her. *I have duties to attend to. Blossomfur will understand.* However, he knew deep down that she would not, and it made his heart ache to think about her scolding him again.

Out of the corner of his eye, Shadeheart saw Silvershy collapsing under the camp exit. She looked gravely injured, blood coating her pelt. He moved to her assistance, but just as he stepped towards the silver warrior, a strange black she cat slipped from the darkness beyond the exit. The cat quickly snatched Silvershy by her scruff, pulling the wounded she cat back into the darkness with her. Shadeheart stared after them, his golden eyes wide. *Do I follow them?* He wanted to make sure Silvershy was alright, but he had to stay in camp to guard the Enforcers..

She has either been killed or rescued. He turned away. *I can't do anything about that.* He had to focus on protecting his family and friends.

Dime's screech rose above the sounds of battling cats. Shadeheart snapped his gaze towards his father to see him pinned on his back by Rabbitstar. NoName was still a mess, laying in Velvet's carcass. She was no help, Dime was on his own. Shadeheart glanced back at

Strike, Tyler and Flare. The brothers were awake, but their eyes were closed and they were in no shape to fight. Flare was in worse condition, holding her mangled and bloodied wings close to her body. Shadeheart couldn't leave them.

He turned back to Dime. The black furred tom writhed against Rabbitstar, dislodging the brown tom's jaws from where they had been fixed into his foreleg. Stunned, Rabbitstar was easily thrown off Dime and staggered on his paws, nearly falling over. Shadeheart shifted his paws anxiously. Flare noticed what was happening and murmured. "Go help him. Now, before he is injured or killed."

Relief washed over Shadeheart and he darted across the clearing, leaping over the fallen tree. He landed firmly on the ground, charging right into Rabbitstar's side.

The brown furred tom was thrown clean off his paws with a shriek, pinned beneath Shadeheart. "Fox-dung!" He swore, clawing at the young warrior. Shadeheart held onto Rabbitstar like his life depended on it, giving Dime time to recover and join him.

Once Dime was safely back on his paws, Shadeheart released his grip on Rabbitstar. His screaming muscles melted in relief from the break, but Rabbitstar was up and attacking in heartbeats. Shadeheart barely had enough time to react. Although he hadn't been fighting much, the excitement of the whole day still left him feeling lethargic. He couldn't begin imagine how the injured were feeling.

As Rabbitstar swiped for Shadeheart, Dime stepped in and swatted the brown tabby's forepaw away. Rabbitstar lunged for Dime, but Shadeheart dug his claws into his haunches, stopping him in his tracks. Together, father and son successfully brought Rabbitstar to his knees.

Wheezing and panting, Rabbitstar struggled to stand, but the simple movement proved too strenuous for the wounded leader. All he could do was surrender, or die. "I'll never give up." The brown tabby hissed, glaring up at them with a fire in his emerald green eyes. "You'll regret the day you took my son from me. I'll kill all of you." His burning gaze turned to NoName, who was suddenly alert to the

scene before her. "Bring Nutwhisker back, this is your last chance."

NoName, still coated from head-to-tail in blood, sighed softly in disappointment. "Isn't possible." She smiled widely at him. "But I didn't know you cared about that medicine cat so much, I thought all you cared about was Lightclan."

Rabbitstar bared her teeth at the red she cat. "You know nothing."

Shadeheart glanced between NoName and Rabbitstar, mildly confused. Dime stepped in. "Rabbitstar, you're no longer welcome here. Take your group and leave this territory."

"Yeah, go back to the Dark Forest where you came from." Shadeheart joined his father. He felt Dime's gaze turn to him, filled with pride.

Rabbitstar sank his claws into the ground. "Not until I get what I deserve!"

"And what is that?" NoName queried, her pure white eyes glaring down at the cowering tom. It was uplifting to see his mother back in power, acting like a true Dark Forest leader. Shadeheart found her soft side embarrassing to witness.

"Give Lightclan to me, if you can't return Nutwhisker's soul." Rabbitstar snapped, suddenly standing straighter so that he loomed over NoName. "Or I'll tear out those special eyes of yours."

NoName visible gulped, but she did not take a step back. Her neck craned back to look Rabbitstar in the eye. "No." She muttered softly. Shadeheart noticed her shadows appear around her forepaws, unnoticed by Rabbitstar.

Within a blink of an eye, NoName had her forepaws around Rabbitstar. Her shadows swarmed the brown tom, coating his pelt in the black mist. The large tom collapsed on the floor with a wail, kicking wildly at the air. "N-no!" He cried, his desperate green eyes darting between NoName, Dime and Shadeheart. "Please!" His gaze fixed on Shadeheart in particular. "Stop this!"

The young warrior took a step back, shaking his head. "I can't. This

is how it must be." His fur bristled along his spine and he looked away as Rabbitstar screamed in anguish. Dime's tail rested on his back, smoothing the fur slightly. The simple touch gave Shadeheart a hint of comfort, but he still couldn't ignore the scene before him.

NoName towered over the writhing Magiclan leader, her white eyes burning into him. Her lips were twisted into a malicious grin, her tail swaying with delight. Shadeheart watched his mother bathe in the power she held over Rabbitstar. It made him feel sick. "Your soul is mine!" The small red she cat yowled over his screams, leaning down to place her paws on his chest.

Rabbitstar grew still, his body giving one last spasm before the light died from his eyes and he breathed his final breath. Shadeheart stared at Rabbitstar as a small sliver of mist rose from his chest, joining the rest of the shadows.

NoName stepped off Rabbitstar's body, turning to look at the spectators who had gathered to watch. "Any of those associated with Rabbitstar will receive the same fate, unless you leave now."

The Magiclan cats fled faster than anything Shadeheart had seen before.

Chapter 29

Shadeheart's POV:

At last, the air became silent. It was overwhelmingly calm. NoName was seated by her den, her head bowed. She was still grieving for her lost companion, Velvet. Dime was ordering a group of able warriors to begin moving some of the fallen tree out of camp, leaving the main log for Zephyr to sort out when- or if- he returned.

With a jolt, Shadeheart realised he hadn't gone to see how Blossomfur was doing. *She's going to be so mad!* He snapped to his paws and made his way to the nursery just in time to see her emerging from it. She locked gazes with him, clearly unhappy. He offered her a sheepish smile as he approached. "I'm so sorry-"

"Don't say a word." Blossomfur muttered, glaring at him. "I know I'm not good enough for you. I don't say that's not true, you've proven it to me countless times overs." The cream she cat sniffed, turning away from him.

Shadeheart's eyes widened. "B-Blossomfur! Wait!" He stumbled after her. "I'm sorry! Please forgive me! I do love you, I care about you so much. You take top priority over anything else."

Blossomfur glanced back at him, pausing in her step. "Really?" She queried, blinking her pale green eyes at him.

"Y-yes!" He gasped, his head bowed. "You're my mate Blossomfur! I am yours!"

The cream furred she cat smiled slightly, satisfied by his reaction. "Alright, I forgive you.. mouse-brain." She chuckled softly and gave his ear a lick. Shadeheart immediately nuzzled her back, glad that she was happy again.

Suddenly Zephyr crashed into camp, unsteady on his paws. "I am back!" He announced, nearly falling on his face as his legs gave

way. The grey Promethean looked exhausted, his red eyes almost colourless. Hos powers appeared to be drained completely. What had he been doing in that forest?

Within a few moments, Shadeheart suddenly noticed the absence of Blazeheart and Nightwhisper. The dark furred warrior approached Zephyr as the Enforcer tended to his wounds. "Did you see Blazeheart and Nightwhisper?"

Zephyr's fur immediately bristled, but he responded softly. "No.. Why?"

"They went looking for you." Shadeheart explained, ignoring Zephyr's aggressive reaction to the mention of the two young warriors. "I hope they're okay."

Zephyr growled. "Whatever. Maybe they just ran off forever, filthy rogues." Something about his voice made it seem like he was lying, but Shadeheart brushed it off once again.

They were interrupted by a furious screech that echoed around camp. Shadeheart snapped his gaze to the nursery, where it had come from, to see Marigoldfur pelting out of the cave. The medicine cat's eyes were stretched wide, a small bundle in her jaws. Shadeheart's heart thumped loudly in his chest when he recognised the bundle as Cinderkit. *What is she doing?!* The young warrior leapt after Marigoldfur, his instincts to protect his kit overpowering his senses.

The golden she cat made a break for the camp exit, but Shadeheart leapt in the way. Marigoldfur slammed into him, throwing them both on the ground. Cinderkit let out a cry as she fell from Marigoldfur's jaws and Shadeheart grabbed her in his own mouth, holding her close. "It's okay." He murmured to his kit. "You're safe."

The scuffled allowed the Dark Forest warriors to grab Marigoldfur and pin the she cat to the ground. Shadeheart rose to his paws, not letting go of Cinderkit for a heartbeat.

"You'll be killed for that! Kit-stealer!" Petal snarled at Marigoldfur.

"I was saving her!" Marigoldfur spat, her teeth bared. "It was Starclan's wish!"

"You're delusional!" Shadeheart joined the argument, letting Cinderkit scurry away to Blossomfur, who was running up to her kit with a mew of worry. "Why would you just take her?"

"I was saving her." Marigoldfur glared at him. "I thought you had morals, Shadeheart. She's your kit! Can't you see that she'll lose herself here? NoName will turn your kits into monsters!"

"I won't let that happen." Shadeheart growled.

"Enough." NoName hissed, striding gracefully into the scene. Her red pelt was shiny, groomed and clean; Velvet's blood had been completely removed. Her pure white eyes sank downwards to stare at Marigoldfur. "I don't care what drove you to attempt to steal my grand-kit. You will be executed on the spot for your crime." His mother turned to Strike, who was padding to his sister's side. "End her. Slowly."

Shadeheart took a few swift steps back as Strike lunged for Marigoldfur, his wings rising above him like two large red shields to block the way. Tyler took a position nearby, watching diligently incase someone tried to intervene.

Marigoldfur's first cry swept through camp. Shadeheart peered around Strike's wings to see his claws piercing the ginger she cat's belly. The horrible tearing sound of the black and red tom's claws ripping through her flesh made Shadeheart wince. He glanced up at NoName, but his mother was focused on the kill, her lips forming a wide grin of insanity. Behind her, Flare approached. The golden she cat's wings dragged limply at her sides, still gravely injured, but her yellow eyes were bright and glued to Marigoldfur's torture.

Shadeheart turned away as Strike moved onto Marigoldfur's face. Blood splattered on the ground as his uncle's claws connected with her cheek, snapping her head to the side. The black tom bit his lip, his ears flattening, as another wail emitted from the SmallClan medicine cat. He didn't look at her; he didn't need to. He could hear the bloodspill, and that was enough. *Why can't Strike just get it over*

with? Shadeheart sighed. *I don't want to see this!*

There was a crunch of bone, soon followed by an ear-splitting scream. It made Shadeheart flinch, a grimace appearing on his face. He turned his green gaze back to Marigoldfur, his curiosity getting the better of him, and saw that Strike had broken one of her forepaws.

"This is quite a show for a simple medicine cat." Zephyr pointed out, appearing at NoName's left side. "Shouldn't we end it to focus on the more pressing matters?" His red gaze flickered to Flare, who was obviously trying to ignore her painful wings.

NoName growled quietly, but didn't meet her Enforcer's gaze. "Let Strike do as he pleases. He hasn't had a kill in a while."

Zephyr shook his head with a disgruntled sigh. "This is unnecessary." But he didn't push it. Instead, the grey Promethean sat back to watch Strike and Marigoldfur with Flare.

Shadeheart frowned, actually agreeing with Zephyr for once. He even followed the Enforcer's lead, turning back to the gruesome scene just in time to see Strike forcing Marigoldfur onto her paws.

"See if you can steal some kits now!" Strike taunted. "You useless pile of fox-dung!" He gave her a shove, making her stumble on her broken paw. Marigoldfur whimpered and fell forwards, hitting the ground hard.

"Please stop!" The medicine cried. "I don't deserve this!"

"Liar." Strike licked his blood-stained lips. "Thief." The winged tom strode over to her, stepping on her broken paw. She let out a desperate yowl, writhing and kicking against him. The large tom just smiled. "I'll break another paw if you keep wailing like a kit."

"Just end it!" Marigoldfur screamed at him, forcing herself to grow still. Shadeheart found himself glued to the spot, unable to look away. It made him sick, but he was strangely interested to see what Strike had planned next. *What has the Dark Forest done to me?*

Strike's claws seized her belly again, tearing further through her

flesh. Shadeheart swore he spotted what looked like her organs emerging from the ravaged flesh. Marigoldfur let out a scream unlike any other, but it soon quieted down as she bled out onto the ground.

Strike glanced at Tyler. "What do you think?"

"That's plenty." His brother responded softly, his blue-tipped tail wrapping around himself, his blue eyes slightly troubled as he watched Marigoldfur's ripped up belly convulse.

Strike's eyes rolled, but turned his back to allow Marigoldfur some solitude for her final breaths. Shadeheart didn't try to look past Strike's wings, he had seen enough already.

At last, Marigoldfur's soft and agonised wheezes transitioned peacefully into silence.

It was oddly calming.

_____

And that's it. This is the final chapter.

Bonus chapter on the way.

Next book should be published in a couple of weeks??

I hope you all enjoyed reading c: <

Thanku for sticking with me.

Bonus Chapter

The silver she cat whimpered in her sleep, tossing and turning within the confinements of her nest. Her tail lashed against the fresh moss that cushioned her, making light thumping sounds as it collided with the ground. Her bloodied pelt was bristling wildly.

Spectrum watched Silvershy from the darkness of the make-shift den they were taking shelter in. The silver warrior had yet to awaken since Spectrum had rescued her from the Dark Forest camp, and she was experiencing nightmares.

The black furred she cat kept to the shadows, her paws patting the mossy ground in boredom. She didn't want to sleep, not when Silvershy was still unconscious. If she awoke while Spectrum was resting, she could escape. *And I didn't go to the trouble of rescuing her just so she could run away.*

A bird called loudly above their den, seemingly oblivious to the two cats that lay right below it. *Or maybe it thinks it's clever, taking refuge on the den roof.* Spectrum looked up, seeing the feathered creature perched on one of the branches that made up the messy den. She hadn't had much time to put anything together, and night had fallen quickly.

The black she cat lifted a paw towards the bird, her claws unsheathing. The bird let out a muffled shriek before it's dead carcass fell through the gap in the roof, landing neatly at Spectrum's paws. The black she cat tucked into her breakfast, smiling at her free meal. With her Promethean powers, hunting was a breeze.

She glanced again at Silvershy to see she was finally awake. The silver she cat was watching Spectrum with narrowed eyes. The black she cat offered her a lazy grin. "Morning."

"Who are you?"

She shrugged. "Spectrum."

"Where are we?"

"Far away from the Dark Forest." Spectrum replied between bites of her bird.

"Why?"

"Why not?" Spectrum countered.

Silvershy growled, wincing from her wounds. "Stop that."

"Stop what?"

"That!"

Spectrum let out a slight chuckle. "Okay, fine."

"Now answer me in full detail." The silver she cat demanded.

The black she cat rolled her eyes, pushing aside her bird to offer it to Silvershy. "I rescued you from that camp for fun. I'm not on your side, but I'm not on the Dark Forest's side. I offer support and ruin wherever I see fit. Want proof? I've been making Blossomfur scheme against Shadeheart for the past few moons. Why, you may ask. For fun, again. I'm also a Promethean, if you hadn't already noticed, so watch yourself."

Silvershy, slightly shocked by the sudden babbling, mumbled. "You're like Zeye?"

"Pretty much." Spectrum meowed. "Now eat that bird that I just offered you. It's the least you could do after I saved your life."

Silvershy immediately took a bite from the half-eaten prey. "Thank you for that, by the way."

"About time you thanked me." Spectrum responded, rolling onto her back to stretch. She heard Silvershy sigh in frustration, but the silver she cat was smart enough to keep her mouth shut.

"Are you keeping me prisoner?" Silvershy asked after a few more quiet moments.

Spectrum looked at her. "Maybe. Maybe not."

The silver she cat growled. "I'd rather you didn't."

The black she cat smiled. "Okay, how about I help you then. You seem quite capable. You think it'll be a good investment to help you defeat the Dark Forest?"

Silvershy frowned. "I'm just one warrior. What can I do?"

"With my help we could spark another rebellion. This time you'll be successful." Spectrum replied.

"How do I know you won't stab me in the back?"

Spectrum grinned. "That's a mystery, even I don't know what will happen."

Silvershy's ears flattened. "So, you help me get back to full health, and I help you with..?"

"I'll decide on that later." Spectrum responded. "I'm sure I'll find some good use for you."

The silver she cat shifted her paws, clearly unhappy with the deal, but she knew that Spectrum wouldn't take no for an answer. "Fine, but I have one question for you."

"And that is?" Spectrum sighed.

"How good are you with kits?"

It was then that Spectrum noticed Silvershy had a tiny bulge in her belly. "Awful." She muttered. "Never had them, never want them."

"Great." Silvershy grinned at the Promethean. "You'll have a great time with my incoming litter then."

"I severely doubt that." Spectrum meowed in response, fixing Silvershy with a threatening glare. "You better keep your kits away from me when they are born, or they'll be my next meal."

Silvershy appeared unaffected by Spectrum's attempt to scare her. She was suddenly very confident about the whole situation, and it made the black she cat uneasy. The silver tabby smiled slightly, the darkness of the den amplifying the faint glow of her lush green eyes. "If you lay one claw on my kits I'll make you wish you hadn't. I don't care if you're a Promethean, that won't change a thing."

Spectrum found herself nodding in understanding. *This is going to be an interesting few moons.*

I DON'T REALLY KNOW WHERE I'M GOING WITH THIS BUT WHO CARES IT'S HAPPENING AND IT WILL HOPEFULLY BE GREAT I HOPE YOU ENJOYED READING BECAUSE I DEFINITELY ENJOYED WRITING THIS I AM IN NO WAY BECOMING SICK OF THIS SERIES 100% STILL LOVE WRITING ABOUT IT

THE NEXT BOOK WILL BE PUBLISHED WHEN I CAN GET OFF MY ASS AND START BEING PRODUCTIVE.

Guess what

Guess who finally got off their lazy ass to publish the next book, *Warriors: Shattered Trust ~Book 4 Series 3~*

The wait is over, at last. Enjoy~